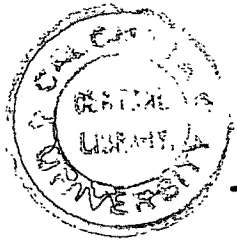


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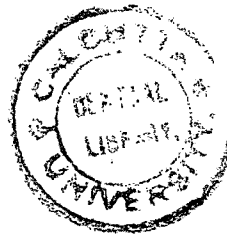
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Book Reviews

Can Men Live Without War?

VANNEVAR BUSH*

NEARLY 50 years ago William James wrote an essay which he called "The Moral Equivalent of War." Since then many things have happened: there have been two world wars, a crippling depression, and now a phenomenal burst of fairly solid prosperity. The whole art of war has been altered profoundly by the application of science. A new kind of empire has arisen, rigidly controlled and avowedly bent on world conquest. The old colonial empires have disintegrated, and a new spirit of nationalism pervades lands that once were inarticulate. Most important of all, there is a growing understanding of what war may mean and a deep yearning among all peoples for peace. It is proper, therefore, to review the arguments which James advanced and to do so in the light of the new circumstances.

James foresaw, with a clarity which was remarkable, that war would sometime end. At a time when warfare and the applications of science were poles apart, he said, "And when whole nations are the armies, and the science of destruction vies in intellectual refinement with the sciences of production, I see that war becomes absurd and impossible from its own monstrosity."

So he turned to what might follow, with evident apprehension that men would become soft—that the virility which had brought the race thus far would give place to flat insipidity.

He first stated the case of the apologists for war, better than they themselves had stated it, repeating the only alternatives they offered: "a world of clerks and teachers, of co-education and

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zo-ophily, of 'consumers' leagues' and 'associated charities,' of industrialism unlimited, and feminism unabashed. No scorn, no hardness, no valor any more ! Fie upon such a cattleyard of a planet."

With this extreme point of view he evidently had a genuine sympathy, for he added : " So far as the central essence of this feeling goes, no healthy minded person, it seems to me, can help to some degree partaking of it. Militarism is the great preserver of our ideals of hardihood, and human life with no use for hardihood would be contemptible. Without risks or prizes for the darer, history would be insipid indeed, and there is a type of military character which every one feels that the race should never cease to breed."

When he then sought a moral equivalent for war he was far from convincing. His alternative was the struggle with nature as a substitute for the struggle between men and nations. Rugged though the struggle with nature sometimes is, we can hardly believe that it would fully serve to keep the red blood flowing hot in our veins and to release the adrenalin which is the messenger between a virile mind and a fighting body. For the conquest of nature today involves only relatively few of us, and it is becoming an intellectual effort rather than a matter of brute strength. So James left me, at least, disappointed with his alternative and bewildered. Let us review his line of argument, in the present setting, and see whether there may be a way out of the dilemma.

His first point may indeed now be underlined. We strive for peace today with conviction and intensity, for great wars must cease if we are to pursue further the path of progress. And our striving is by no means hopeless. If great wars are outlawed—not by treaty, perhaps, but by a general realization of their absurdity—secondary wars will go on for a time by conventional means, and nations will maintain their postures of readiness to fight. But the end of all war is now definitely in sight for the first time in human history. No nation today can attack its *prepared* neighbor with the expectation of profiting immensely and securing a place in the sun, as has been attempted twice within our memory. The result today would be devastation for all, cities utterly destroyed,

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populations killed and maimed, starvation and disease rampant. That this is the brute fact is now obvious to the most obtuse. Nor can a tyrant or ruling clique, by bringing on a war, hope to advance their private interests or provide a diversion from popular discontent ; no modern all-out war will leave in power anywhere those who perpetrated it.

War might, to be sure, come by accident, and this we must guard against assiduously. Little wars with the foolhardy use of weapons of mass destruction could lead to a great war. If tempers rise, we shall need to curb the trigger-happy fools among us. Were we so gullible as to let down our guard too soon and invite a surprise mass attack which would prevent our retaliation and end the conflict at a single stroke, the invitation might be seized upon by those who still think of conquering the world by force of arms. It is not impossible that a group of desperate men could pull the temple down on all of us, but the conditions and concepts which brought on most of the great wars of history have disappeared. We are all on notice, if we can read or listen, that indulgence in all-out war would be suicide.

Self-preservation is a very powerful primary urge, and an understanding of the present monstrosity of war is increasing among the masses of people in spite of both iron and bamboo curtains. There is certainly more chance than ever before that we may now look forward to peace. In fact, we may conclude that we can have peace if we are not utterly gullible or careless.

The second point made by James also deserves emphasis. The main argument of the apologists for war has vanished as science has stepped into the picture. Whatever else may happen, the glamour of war is gone.

Where do the virtues of war lie today ? Is courage needed to watch a radar screen or adjust a guided missile ? Where is the daring of the soldier when the folks at home encounter equal risks ? When one man guides a plane that can destroy a city, what becomes of the infectious influence of comradeship, the sense of being engaged

with many others in a common hazardous campaign, the identification of self with a group which could inspire, or was supposed to inspire, even the common soldier with ideals and courage? Great war has become complex and now must be fought at a distance, if at all. It has lost forever those qualities that once had a real appeal for the red-blooded man.

Do we then look forward to some sort of Utopia? James had little use for Utopias, for he wrote in "The Dilemma of Determinism":

Why does the painting of any paradise or utopia, in heaven or on earth, awaken such yawnings for nirvana and escape? The white-robed harp-playing heaven of our sabbath-schools, and the ladylike tea-table elysium represented in Mr. Spencer's *Data of Ethics*, as the final consummation of progress, are exactly on a par in this respect,—lubberlands, pure and simple, one and all . . . If this be the whole fruit of the victory, we say; if the generations of mankind suffered and laid down their lives, if prophets confessed and martyrs sang in the fire, and all the sacred tears were shed for no other end than that a race of creatures of such unexampled insipidity should succeed, and protract . . . their contented and inoffensive lives—why, at such a rate, better lose than win the battle, or at all events better ring down the curtain before the last act of the play, so that a business that began so importantly may be saved from so singularly flat a winding-up.

We need have little fear of any such dismal outcome. Struggles will not cease even if armed conflict ends. Between nations there will continue to be political jockeying for position and very intense economic competition. We shall still need to cope with penetration and subversion and face the difficult task of guiding our friends among the younger nations to positions of true independence and stability.

If war ceases, it will be a different sort of world, and the apologists for war usually overlook one of its primary attributes, the ending of which might greatly influence our lives in subtle ways. During the past two decades the United States has forged ahead at an unprecedented rate until it stands as the unquestioned leader of the free world, powerful, disciplined, even wise as it attempts to press further by lifting its neighbors with it. War and the fear of war produced this result—produced also our present great

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prosperity. This did not occur because of war profits, for there are no such things as war profits for a country as a whole ; war merely wastes man's goods and man's labor. In many nations the waste has overbalanced all else, but we were fortunate. Our advance has come about because the nation became internally united and went to work, because secondary quarrels were submerged or tempered in the common cause, because public opinion forced the channeling of all effort in a single direction, because men's spirits rose and their blood ran hot as they faced together an enemy that all could recognize. Where would we now be had there been no such cement to hold us together during the past 20 years—if we had worked at cross-purposes, occupied ourselves with petty quarrels or succumbed to the vices of intrigue and treachery ?

Does this mean that, if peace comes and the fear of war is lifted, we shall again return to all the old quarrels and become a nation divided, split into factions with animosity and petty intrigues paramount ? Does it mean that we shall lose the vision of a happy and prosperous nation, brought about by our own unity and determination, in which we can approach our disagreements objectively and in a spirit of relative good will ? Does it mean that we shall forget how to battle with one another vigorously and with full conviction and determination, but standing up, and shall again thrash about in the mire of mutual suspicion ? Do biting and kicking have to take the place of honest blows given and received ?

The citizens of the United States have shown that they take most of the guarantees of the Bill of Rights for granted, that they see no real danger to primary liberties or any need to be keenly on the alert to preserve them. In this complacency lies danger, but there is one element of the free life that is not taken for granted at all, that is highly valued, and that men are willing to fight for, if necessary, without question. This element is the opportunity for an individual to rise as far as his talents, health, and determination will take him, without artificial barriers of any kind.

We by no means have reached perfection in this regard. There are still artificial barriers of race, birth, and resources. Nor would

we banish the paternal instinct, forbid the father to aid his son to make a good start in life, or frown on any effort of a man to help one of his fellows. There is a fundamental difference between this mutual aid—even the banding together of groups with mutual interests for mutual advancement—and the throwing of artificial obstacles in the path of a young man struggling to rise by his own efforts. We shall always have with us those who will drift, who will refuse to pull their weight in the boat, to whom opportunity means nothing; the problem of their place in society is not one that concerns us here. It is the artificial obstacle in the path of the ambitious and able that we would banish, and this has not as yet been fully accomplished.

We have proceeded much farther toward the ideal than ever before in any country at any time. The workman at the bench recognizes the artificial limitations that surround him, and his own ambitions may be ended. But he knows, too, that for his son, his neighbor's son, or the bright attractive boy down the street there are genuine opportunities to rise to positions of influence and satisfaction. Luck, the caprice of men in high places, loyalty to dependents, an insidious bacterium or virus—any one of these may stop him in his tracks. Only a few will have the ambition to rise and the skill and personality that must go with it, but the opportunity is there, and it is real. The son of a tailor may become the honored surgeon, respected by men of power, loved by patients who owe their lives to him. The peddler of bananas may come to rule an industrial empire he has built. The painter's helper may become a labor leader and treat on equal terms with the captains of industry. The haberdasher may become president. It has happened. The bans and taboos are less than they ever were before. This is the land of opportunity, and we must keep it so and enhance this central aspect of our liberty.

It is this which yet may bind us together in the ideal of brotherhood among men, not as a vague generality to which we pay lip service but as a living reality, exemplified by the opportunity for

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all to develop their talents to the utmost for their own benefit and the benefit of their fellow men.

We look forward to living in a new sort of world. The flowering of science, which has rendered war absurd, is also giving us wealth, comfort, and freedom from disease of the body or the mind. Our contests for position in the intricate fabric of society no longer need require that the unsuccessful shall suffer want and distress.

When individual progress is artificially barred, when men are divided into classes with impenetrable barriers, when men are serfs or slaves, or fettered by false restraint so that they cannot move, struggles on any subject are bound to be bitter. When a man knows that if he loses out, in competition with his fellows, those he loves will be ill-nourished and neglected, he must fight too desperately to care for the conventions of fairness and decency.

But when artificial barriers are gone, and men may rise if they have what it takes—when there is a floor beneath which no man need fall, a floor that will ensure a decent life—then the contests of men with one another may well be on a different plane. The key is the preservation and enhancement of individual opportunity in all its forms. Few will rise, for few are the places to fill at the top, but all will have dignity and satisfaction. Those who prefer for any reason to remain in humble status will do so by choice.

We can have peace. And with it we can have prosperity, greater than the world has even seen, with a distribution of its blessings that preserves the necessary order of an industrial society while avoiding both arrogant opulence and cringing poverty. As we attain these things, whenever we do, shall we return to petty bickering and strife, sordid intrigue, and bitter recriminations ? Or shall we tackle our problems as men, vigorously, with courage and convictions, pulling no punches, but with decency and fairness ? We may, indeed, be able to rise to the latter if we keep our senses and our objectivity—and, above all, if we open the door of opportunity wide so that we battle as free men, in the pride and dignity to which only free men may aspire.

Here, indeed, may be an acceptable equivalent for war, preserving and enhancing in our people those virile attributes which conquered the old frontiers and built an industrial civilization beyond compare. When the foolhardy nature of international combat is fully recognized and great wars are banished, we may still struggle with nature and with one another and thus keep the vitality of the race from being sapped by insipid ease. If we do so as free men, independent, proud, seizing our opportunity in an open field from which artificial barriers have been removed, we may find that struggle, so necessary for the health of our race, can be entered upon in decency and dignity, and the vulgarity of war may give place to strife for worthy causes conducted with fairness and good will.

Yet, having said this, we have not come to the end of the matter. Man needs to exercise his virile attributes—in sport, in coping with the hazards of the wilderness, in honest and decent conflict with his fellows for just and worthy causes. No man has lived fully who has not experienced the fear, the exultation, of meeting great odds and struggling to prevail. But no man has lived fully who has not also experienced the joy of close association with worthy fellows or who has not known the thrill of individual creation. He who can say honestly to himself that he has discovered a set of facts or a relation between phenomena not known to any man before him in all history, and that by his insight and skill he has made them comprehensible to the human intellect—such a man experiences the same uplift of spirit as the one who first climbs a high mountain or first runs a mile in four minutes. When the accomplishment results not from the lonely acts of individual genius but from the efforts of a team or group having mutual trust and confidence, supplementing one another's skills, compensating for one another's weaknesses, carrying the unfortunate over the rough places, heartening the leader by steadfast support—then all members of the group enjoy a satisfaction transcending that of accomplished creation, a satisfaction of success in their margin of effort to attain something that was beyond the capacity of any individual.

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If war ends, we must still have outlets for our inherited energies ; we need only attempt to render them dignified and worthy. But we also shall have increased opportunities for other satisfactions, not so intense but far more lasting and substantial. The unifying bond of war will be gone, but it can give place to a nobler bond, less universal, far more genuine and strong. This can appear in the midst of diverse careers. To me, naturally, the field of science stands out uniquely in its opportunities.

The country will be full of struggle and conflict as diverse causes are fought over. As individuals and citizens we enter if our consciences and inclinations so dictate. By entering we may help to raise the level of the contests and render them worthy. But research centers such as the Carnegie Institution stand aside from all this.

Within the institutions dedicated to scientific research lies opportunity for the individual. They do not care about a man's origins—his country, race, or religion. They seek men who have an ambition to rise to the heights in their scientific professions, and insist, moreover, that among their talents should be a large measure of ability to rise by effective collaboration with others. They want men of generous instinct and men who are devoted to science because they believe that the life of a scientist yields more satisfaction than any other career on earth and contributes more genuinely to the public weal. When they find a young man of this sort they welcome him with open arms. After that no artificial barrier stands in his path. He can rise as rapidly and as high in his profession as his own effort, judgment, and skill will carry him. He will be judged only according to the estimation in which he is held by fellow scientists—his peers. The requirements are rigorous, but the opportunity these institutions offer is real and complete. We must always keep it so.

No more war ? Peace is indeed in sight if we are wise. But not an end of contest or struggle. And certainly not an end of opportunity, which may render the lives of those who follow us not insipid but virile, not belligerent but creative.

The Poet as Playwright

ARCHIBALD MacLEISH*

ONE would feel happier about the future of poetry on the stage were it not for the defensiveness of those who proclaim it. Poetry had used the theatre and the theatre had used poetry for thousands of years before prose took over but our contemporaries—even the best of them, even Mr. Eliot—go on as though the play in verse still required justification. “No play,” said Mr. Eliot at Harvard four years ago, “should be written in verse for which prose is *dramatically* adequate.” That judgment might have been expected from a Broadway critic, most of whom would put the period after the word “verse,” but it has a defunctive sound in the mouth of the most successful dramatic poet of our generation. If Mr. Eliot admits it, then prose is indeed the appropriate language for the modern stage and the poet can be welcomed only on those rare occasions when prose has already failed.

And yet dramatic poetry has flourished under many and various conditions in the past and ours is an age in which it might very conceivably be expected to flourish again. When an age is an age of actions as ours is, and when men live in confusion and die in ignorance for lack of that very perception of the meaning of their acts which poetry on the stage has given in other times and places, and which prose has yet to give in like measure or with a comparable intensity, a renewal of dramatic poetry would seem possible. We go back willingly enough in our generation to those mirrors of human meaning which poetic drama has provided to earlier men: we go back to *Julius Caesar* and to *Macbeth* and above all to *Hamlet*. Why

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then do we advise the playwrights of our own time, who know its temper and who live with its persistent questions, to write in prose wherever prose will serve?

An obvious explanation would be that ours is an "unpoetic" generation. We hear it said often enough and every now and again we run across a writer who does his best, consciously or unconsciously, to prove it true. But the fact is, first, that we aren't "unpoetic," and, second, that it would not explain our attitude toward poetry on the stage if we were, and, finally, that the theory in any case would scarcely account for Mr. Eliot, who is so far from being "unpoetic" that he is one of the principal poets now alive. Books of poetry do not sell by the thousands of copies per day as some of Byron's did, but they are read—Yeats, for example, and Rilke's *Duino Elegies*—far more seriously and to far greater purpose. The reading of poetry for "pleasure" may have gone out with the first Romantics, and its passing may very properly be regretted, but the reading of poetry for understanding has more than taken its place. And not among the specialists alone. Upwards of five thousand people sat in a raw wind in the Public Garden in Boston on a June evening last year to listen to Robert Frost; and Boston, as those who read its newspapers are aware, is no longer the city of the Brahmins.

No, something more than an imaginary aversion to poetry is involved in our skittishness about verse in the theatre, and Mr. Eliot's dictum indicates pretty clearly, I think, what it is. The trouble lies not in our feeling about poetry but in our feeling about the theatre. To say that no play should be written in verse for which prose is dramatically adequate is to say something, not about verse, but about the nature of a play, or rather about the conception of a play which is current at this particular time and place. Mr. Eliot is not saying that prose is better than verse for most purposes. Mr. Eliot is saying that a play, as we conceive of it (for he is not offering his advice to Aeschylus or Racine), is something which, by its nature, demands prose wherever prose will serve.

Before we ask the appropriate question, why? there is an incidental assumption underlying all this, as it underlies so much similar talk, which must be examined. It is an assumption which comes oddly from Mr. Eliot. I refer to the implicit idea that the choice of verse or prose is a free choice which a playwright may make on rational or at least technical grounds. Few poets—Yeats on occasion and a very few others—have been tempted to write plays in prose and no prose writers, with Mr. Maxwell Anderson as the distinguished exception to prove the rule, have been tempted to write plays in verse. What is more likely to happen is what seems to have happened to Mr. Eliot himself: a poet wishing to write for the stage undertakes to write *as poet* and makes it his task to teach himself how, as poet, to make his poetry dramatic. Or a prose writer, similarly seduced, labors to adapt his prose to his new medium without a thought to the possibility that he might turn himself into a poet first. The figure of the playwright with a plot in mind, debating with himself whether to write it out in verse or prose, is thus a figure made of straw. In most cases the decision will have been made in advance, and in any case the play itself will have at least as much to say about the result as the playwright or the critic who advises him. But this latter is a dark subject to which we must return.

The question to be answered first is the question Mr. Eliot poses. Why should prose take precedence in the contemporary theatre? Mr. Eliot explains with his usual lucidity and patience. The difference between prose and verse on the stage is not that one is natural and the other artificial: both are artificial. The difference is that theatre audiences, either because they make no distinction between the talk they hear at home and the talk they hear in a prose dialogue, or because they are able to ignore the distinction when they do notice it, *think* of prose on the stage as natural whereas poetry on the stage, being noticeably different from the talk at home, *seems* to them artificial. Audiences, in other words, are conscious of the poetry as poetry but not conscious of the prose as prose. And this

consciousness of the poetry as poetry is a dramatic liability, whether the audience likes the poetry or dislikes it, for it gets in the way of the dramatic action. Which seems to mean that it gets in the way of the audience's acceptance of the lifelikeness of the dramatic action.

We are thus given the measure of the dramatic superiority of prose to verse. The measure is the audience's willingness to accept what it hears as "true to life." The dramatic demands of the contemporary stage are the demands imposed by an audience which wishes to receive a particular illusion from the actions it witnesses and the words it hears: the illusion that it is seeing and hearing *life the way it is*. It is this measure, Mr. Eliot is saying, which determines the superiority of prose for most plays. And it is this measure also which determines, for Mr. Eliot, the superiority of verse on those occasions when prose is inadequate and verse should take its place. He puts it this way: "... beyond the namable, classifiable emotions and motives of our conscious life when directed towards action—the part of life which prose drama is wholly adequate to express—there is a fringe of indefinite extent, of feeling which we can only detect, so to speak, out of the corner of the eye and can never completely focus. . . . This peculiar range of sensibility can be expressed by dramatic poetry, at its moments of greatest intensity."

That there is such a range of sensibility, a range which can only be expressed by that particular organization of language which poetry is—that organization which combines, as Coleridge saw, an unusual degree of order with an unusual degree of freedom from order—all readers of poetry will acknowledge. Only those who, through ignorance of poetry, are ignorant of the existence of the sensibility it expresses will question Mr. Eliot's statement. But what is important here is not the truth of the statement but the use to which it is being put. Poetry, Mr. Eliot says, is permissible on the stage in dealing with actions which impinge on this "fringe of feeling" not merely because poetry is capable of the expression of these feelings whereas prose is not, but because, *when such feelings are involved, the theatre audience will accept poetry as "true to life."*

Mr. Eliot is explicit about it. The audience, he says, should find "at the moment of awareness that it is hearing poetry, that it is saying to itself: '*I could talk in poetry too!*'"

Both the rule and the exception, therefore, are justified on the same ground—the audience's acceptance of the language in either case as true to life or lifelike. What is involved, in other words, is a preconception of the nature of the illusion the modern stage is expected to create. If you take the position that the language of the theatre should be the language which audiences regard as most like actual talk, or, in the exceptional case, as most like the language they themselves would use under the emotional circumstances, you are assuming that the illusion the contemporary theatre exists to create is the illusion of actuality.

Now there is, of course, wide support for this conception of the demands of contemporary audiences. In that part of our theatre to which the invidious, and not infrequently envious, adjective "commercial" is applied, the illusion of the actual is the standard target. Everything is made as much like itself as possible and the appetite which is satisfied is the appetite the newspapers arouse. But because the illusion of the actual is the illusion served by the contemporary theatre in its most successful forms it does not necessarily follow that the illusion of the actual is the only illusion the stage can provide or our generation is capable of accepting. Nor does it follow that a modern defense of poetry on the stage must ground itself on that restricted foundation.

I have nothing but admiration for Mr. Eliot's gallant purpose to reconquer a place on the contemporary stage for poetry by bringing poetry into overt competition, as he phrases it, with prose. Prose has had the stage pretty much to itself for the past hundred years largely because poetry has refused to compete with it, preferring instead to retire to a private literary world of its own where, to all dramatic intents and purposes, it has palely perished. Plays have been written in verse for generations and no one has cared, not even the versifiers—least of all, indeed, the versifiers. If there is

one body of printed matter to which the contemporary poet does not wish to return, it is to the body—carcass rather—of double-columned pages produced in the name of drama by the poets of the nineteenth century. Mr. Eliot is the first poet of distinction and stature to attempt to invade the public stage *as public stage* in a very long time, Yeats alone excepted.

But greatly as one must admire Mr. Eliot's good sense and gallantry, one must question, notwithstanding, the strategy he has adopted. Granted that the stage is a battlefield where a play must fight for its life in competition with other plays and under conditions established by the sensibility of the audience, whatever the audience of the moment may be, it does not inevitably follow that the field can be won only by emulating the contemporary masters and accepting the dramatic illusion they have so successfully exploited.

There are other illusions within the capacity of the stage and there are other illusions within the reach of the human heart. There is, for one example, the illusion—very different from the illusion of the actual—of the real. Virginia Woolf's casual suggestion in her *Diary* that the test of a novel is its power to "enhance one's vision of life" defines the difference. The illusion of the real is the illusion, whether in the novel or on the stage, not that this is the *actual* man, true to life, but that this is the man *himself*: not that this action is an action *like* life but that this action *is* life—what life really is. It is an illusion which the stage knows well and has known since its beginnings. The plot of *Oedipus* with its long-forgotten murder and its sudden rush of discoveries is as improbable in any actual terms as a plot could be, but the illusion *Oedipus* creates is an illusion of the revelation of the web of human fate which men have accepted as a perception of the reality of their lives for thousands of years. Shakespeare's *Tempest* is as remote from actuality as Prospero's island but its metaphor is a metaphor which tells us more about ourselves than any newspaper has ever told us. Yeats's *Purgatory* has no prototype in actuality but it casts its shadow in the country where things *are*.

Moreover, as these examples suggest, the illusion of the real is an illusion which dramatic poetry can pursue at least as well as

dramatic prose. The illusion of the real is indeed the principal business of poetry. It is to know our own reality as living, feeling beings that poetry is written and that poetry is read. And the theatre does not differ from the printed page in this regard. The power of Shakespeare's finest plays to penetrate the human mystery is a power given them in great part by their poetry, as every listening audience knows.

Why then should a defense of poetry on the modern stage be written on the assumption that the sole illusion permissible to the stage is the illusion of the actual? The answer, in Mr. Eliot's case, is apparently that modern audiences will accept nothing else—that modern audiences wish to regard the stage not as a stage for art but as a peephole into actuality and that the playwright must accept that fact, shaping his language to meet the public expectation. An actual couple in an actual bar would not address each other in verses and therefore this couple on the stage, committed by their observers to an actuality as strict as that of a newspaper column, must not speak in verses either. To introduce verse would be to ask the audience to accept a dramatic convention and modern audiences detest dramatic conventions.

There is no question, of course, but that the expectation of the audience is a limiting factor so far as the playwright is concerned. Does it, however, follow that that expectation is an immutable and fixed condition about which the playwright can do nothing? Do audiences accept the verse of Shakespeare's plays because they have been taught in school they should, or do they accept it because the expectations the plays arouse in them are expectations with which the verse accords? I should guess, the latter. I should guess that what enables Shakespeare's people to speak poetry even to a modern audience is the fact that it is poetry the audience expects and, furthermore, that that expectation is one the play itself creates. The plays do not offer to present the world of actuality. They are, quite frankly, plays—works of art. Which is to say that they are, like all works of art, worlds complete in themselves: worlds in which the speaking of verse is accepted as naturally as the colors

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of a picture. Because *Hamlet* offers, not a glimpse of the private life of a Danish court, but a perception of the nature of the human heart, the language of poetry seems not inappropriate to it, even in ears where poetry is seldom heard.

But if this is true of Shakespeare why may it not be true for lesser men? Why may not the justification of verse on the stage, even in a time like ours, be found in the play itself? Mr. Eliot insists, and rightly I think, that there are no "poetic subjects": no subject for plays which, by their nature, call for verse. A poetic drama may be made out of any experience of which men are capable, no matter how ordinary or, as the word goes, prosaic. But because there are no poetic subjects—no inherently poetic actions—it does not follow that there are no poetic *organizations of action*—no organizations of action on the stage which require poetry for their realization. An action so organized as to reveal not only its dramatic character, but its human significance, demands much of its language. And it is when the expressive demands are heaviest that prose gives way. Prose is a magnificent instrument of communication, but when understanding must be achieved, not by the mind but by the emotions as well, by the senses, by the whole being, poetry which reaches the mind through the senses and the emotions, which calls the whole being into play, goes on alone. There is no equivalent in prose for the lyric poem for the self-evident reason that it is precisely what distinguishes poetry from prose that makes the lyric poem—the ultimate margin.

The fundamental justification for poetry on the stage, in other words, is not the one given by Mr. Eliot. It is not that the audience finds itself feeling, at a given moment of emotional intensification, "*I could talk in poetry too!*" The fundamental justification lies in the play itself, in the illusion the play undertakes to create, in the kind of understanding the play communicates. To go far one must go by art. To go farthest one must use art in its ultimate resource. The question at that point is no longer a question of the naturalness of the language spoken on the stage. The only question there is a question of the language's effectiveness. An audience does not

accept the poetry of the end of *Antony and Cleopatra* because "I could talk in poetry too!" but because there are no other words than these to say what is being said.

But the point is not that Mr. Eliot's theory and example are open to question. Mr. Eliot's great reputation is secure. The point is that the conception of poetry on the stage as a mere means of expression, alternative to prose, the use of which is justified only in the case of certain inexplicable feelings, distracts attention from the true problem of the modern dramatic poet. The true problem is the problem of the poetic organization of action in such a time as ours. To regain the stage in its own character, not as a mere emulation of prose, poetry must find its own poetic way to the mastery the stage demands—the mastery of action. What poetry in English has lost is not expressive skill. The craftsmanship of the art of verse is at a high point in this country and in England. What poetry has lost is the power to imitate an action. It has become inward and reflective to such a point that the great metaphors of action, which are the true figures of the poetic stage, are beyond its competence. Until it can people the stage again with actions which are at once poetry *and* drama, poetic drama will not exist.

That end will not be achieved by adopting for poetry the illusion of the actual. The poet who adopts the illusion of the actual can bring poetry to the stage only by half persuading his audience that it is prose they are attending: the better he succeeds as playwright the less he will succeed as poet. Poetry will return to the stage, not when its presence is concealed, but when the audience is brought to expect it and, expecting it, to need it. That expectation only the illusion of the real can create. The poet as playwright must so manage his actions and his language as to produce the illusion that the world of his play is a world in which reality may itself appear as the God may come to the bridge in one of the ancient Noh plays of Japan.

The Kinds of Knowledge

MARK VAN DOREN*

WHEN a great university, in the name of that knowledge to which it believes all men as men have right, reviews its own career of learning and of teaching, it is bound to ask itself what knowledge really is, and how much of it exists at present or can be imagined as existing in some day to come. Such a university, putting such a question to itself, will be expected to make a modest answer, for in no other place should the limits of the human mind be better known; but it is not required to deny that knowledge exists at all, or to suggest, if knowledge be supposed to exist in several kinds, that these are like the kinds of snakes in Ireland: varieties of nothing in the end.

The university has faith in knowledge. Or to put the case more accurately, it has faith in the possibility of knowledge. The possibility is what matters, plus a method, or a set of methods, whereby the actuality may in ever higher and higher degree be encouraged to exist. Those to whom the problem is not real assume the actuality already to exist; somewhere, somehow, someone knows everything. But to others it is a familiar fact that the true scholar is more interested in what he may know tomorrow than in what he knows today, and is more likely to want to talk about it. The modesty of the true scholar is neither a gesture nor a joke. To him it is quite literally the case that a science of anything presupposes a vast ignorance concerning it: an ignorance, indeed, so vast that even its very nature may never be understood. He as a scientist, in other words, may never become clear as to what it is of which he is ignorant, or ought to consider himself ignorant; he may never learn just what it is

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that he should seek to know. Meanwhile, however, he has his method ; he does know how to proceed within the field of ignorance he has managed to define. And that one field is vast enough ; nor will all it, perhaps, be ever conquered. So he is always busy, with scarcely the time to pause and tell us, should we ask, how much he knows ; and more particularly, how much of what he knows.

To the extent that he is a true scholar he will contemplate this question of the what, and seriously ask it of himself. Is he studying the right thing ?—which means, for true scholars, the most difficult, the most hidden, the most abstract, the most inaccessible thing. Has he been content thus far with fields of ignorance that others have defined ? Has he discovered any for himself ? And if he has, is it the farthest field, beyond whose fences, conceivably, the simple truth sits looking at itself ? Often this farthest field seems nearest to the uninitiated mind, which asks elementary questions about it : What is it, after all ? Why are you studying it ? What would it mean to know what you say you want to know ? Is it important ? What difference will it make ? Or, in a more friendly voice, even an eager one : What is electricity ? What is life ? What is poetry ? Can history be true, and if so, what history is most true ? Is there such a thing as human nature, and does it grow ? What is government ? What is law ? What is money ? What are the stars, and why is there so much space between them ? Where is God ? And if man knew everything, would he be God ?

The truest scholar will be the most tolerant of such questions, for they are like the ones he asks himself when he is simple and serious ; and if he is never simple and serious, he is a pedant or a quack, and the long face he wears as he discourses of his method is a sign that he does not know why he has it, or what he will do with the results of it when he gets them. Universities have their share of persons who practice learning without a divine license, who do not know what is important unless someone else tells them, who work in fields of ignorance from which for them there is no escape, who labor in the dark to raise ever higher and higher the heap of little fragments which in their boastful moments they call the “sum of human knowledge.”

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But what is the sum of human knowledge? Or what would it be if it ever were complete? And is it necessarily a future thing, something to be hoped for only, something impossible now? Can one be certain that it does not already exist? If it needs to be the equivalent of God's knowledge, certainly it does not exist; for men are neither more nor less divine than they originally were. But doubtless there is no such need. Men may know merely what men can know. And according to one view they have always known it. Jonathan Swift thought men knew it in his time, two centuries and more ago. But most of them, he concluded, were not aware that they knew it, and so had got lost in mazes of speculation and experiment for which there was no earthly use—nor divine either, since God does not find it necessary to be a scientist, a philosopher, or a theologian. These are human terms, less admirable for Swift than the monosyllable "man." Most men in any time, he said, know all that can be known about how to live and how not to live; it is only sickness, or corruption, or perversity that cuts them off from life itself, which everywhere is simple and makes no mystery of its rules. Liars are liars in any world; and so are hypocrites and thieves, and lazy people; and so are the lovely people—the kind, the just, the generous, the temperate, the courageous, the wise, the strong.

There is validity in such a view. Men's thoughts about themselves are different from one decade to the next, but their virtues and their vices do not seem to change. The very man who tries to prove that there is no longer any distinction between good and bad—that these are words, not things—will in his next breath denounce a neighbor of whose conduct he disapproves. The very man who swears that it is old-fashioned to speak of truth may find himself, before the day is over, calling some other man a falsifier. Most of us, it may be, know more than we admit; we know, as Swift said, how to live; at least we keep on living, as our great-grand-fathers did. And this regardless of whether or not we have access to the kinds of knowledge with which universities are concerned.

And properly concerned. For the possibilities of knowledge which haunt and inspire scholars are themselves among the things

that prove man human. Not animal, certainly, since animals know perfectly how they should live in order to survive and to repeat themselves. Not godlike, just as certainly, for the possibilities can never be more than possibilities. And if Swift for all his genius could despise them, so we too may remember how they limit us ; we too may learn from him and them how not to be too proud.

Yet they are half the truth about mankind. To be a scholar is not to be an unnatural thing. The nature of man is to want more knowledge than he will ever possess ; and to work for it as if it still might be possessed. And if in his universities he gives that knowledge a variety of names, if he recognizes it in more than a single form, he does not in so doing deny that the many may be one, or might be if a proper view of them could be obtained. Perhaps in our day he tries less hard than once he did to master the perspectives that would be involved in such a complete and distant view of himself in the act of contemplation. His nature does not, it would seem, permit him to do this ; yet he has made the attempt, and he will make it again. At the moment, however, he looks as if he lacked the ambition, not to say the curiosity. We do not hear him asking what it is, if it is anything, that the poet and the mathematician know together, or the historian and the chemist, or the musician and the doctor, or the moral philosopher and the atomic physicist. The sum of human knowledge, were it attainable and statable, might be a single sentence, a single word ; or it might be only so clear a view of everything that sound was supererogatory, and speech an impertinence. Granted that the sum is inaccessible, man still may speculate as to its parts, and as to the niceties of their relation. Contemporary man, at least in universities, refuses to do so. He lets the study of literature be altogether different from the study of bacteria and the stars. If some resemblance actually is there, he does not know of it because he has never inquired. He assumes a perfect absence of relation ; and so if he is a student of poetry he is content with total ignorance of energy, proportion and equation, though poetry is built of just those things ; and if he is a natural scientist he does not stop to wonder whether it is more than a

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coincidence that art must be natural too, or must seem so if it would exert its utmost force; nor does he ask that force to confess any resemblance it may bear to gravity and whirlwinds, to natural selection and a mushroom cloud.

But even if he did this, and even if the poet were better educated than he is, the answer would never come, we may be sure, in the form of one apocalyptic word. The knowledge of such a word which the theologian has is another kind of knowledge, unsupported by what is ordinarily called evidence, either in universities or in the outer world; but especially in universities, whose scholars are experts in evidence, and grow wary at once if told that something is true although it never can be proved. Yet revelation belongs in their lives too, as it belongs in the career of every healthy intellect, no matter what the training it has had, and whether this be great or small. Any man knows things he has not been told; the good teacher gives forth more than he was taught; sometimes the truth comes easily, as if it said itself. And this can be the case whatever the theory of knowledge one professes—Swift's or that of the most methodical scholar. The knowledge that advances, like the knowledge that stands still, is studded with discoveries which cannot be traced to any source. It is vanity to deny this, and folly to underrate it. Nor is it the same thing as that apocalyptic word which is never to be spoken. It used to be understood that the knowledge of angels came with less difficulty than that of man. It came instantaneously, whereas for men it was the labor of a life-time to learn the little that they knew. Men still are less than the angels, and what they know is of a lower order; yet any man, on any occasion, may be more wise than he is able to explain. The name for this is "brilliance": a sudden light that no one has turned on. And it can come on anywhere: in the laboratory, the recitation hall, the midnight study; in the field, the street, the noisy or the quiet room; in sleep, or at the hour of waking, or halfway through an otherwise eventless day. It too is knowledge, though it never has been earned.

Most human knowledge, nevertheless, comes hard. Either it distills itself painfully out of common experience, or it subjects the

scholar, its uncommon devotee, to excruciating efforts of observations and close thought. Seldom if ever does inspiration come without such fiery trials before it, and even then it may not come ; but if it does, it has to that extent been earned, and is deserved. The university does not count upon its coming, any more than it lays out work in the expectation that only geniuses will do it. Miracles and geniuses are rare in any world, and it is the part of wisdom not to await them. The academic life is bound to be laborious, however many or few the kinds of knowledge it is lived for. It is not as dull as some men think it, but it is duller than a circus or a battlefield ; and so it ought to be, since neither in game nor in earnest is it lived in defiance of death. The definition of all life is rather its province : all life, whose most exciting secrets it has no mandate to unearth. To define a thing is not to possess it. The clearest definition of life would be the completest statement of what it is not. Life itself, the individual thing, prefers to be known for what it is ; and those who have known it the most directly may be the least articulate about its essence. Its essence, tragic or comic, the university is under no obligation to reveal.

But to say this is not to justify the vulgar charge that academic life is unreal life. It is as real as definition is : as useful, and as clear. In an ideal world the privilege of experience and the duty of understanding would doubtless not exclude each other. Nor in the world we have do they do so altogether ; if they could, neither one of them would then make sense. The pure thing and the pure word are not for men as men are made. So the university continues to be looked to for more than dry information and dead fact ; for more, even, than the cold light of clearest comprehension. It is looked to for wisdom, a warmer and a wilder thing than any of those. And often enough wisdom is there ; nor does it seem too different from the wisdom of the great world, begotten by virtue upon the body of experience. The scholar is not forbidden to have experience ; he is a man too, and loves and hates and undergoes ambition. At his worst, if the extreme case be considered, he is unable to make his humanity appear ; it was weak to begin with, as could have been

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true of any man, or else he has darkened it and dampened it with cellar growths which have shut him away at last from the sun and from all things that the sun makes clear to normal men. But in the best cases, and happily these are numerous, he has been rendered more sensible, not less so, by the education he has given himself and others. He has become, that is to say, more practical. He has become a man of whom other men will not hesitate to ask advice. In the best world we have any right to expect, the scholar and the citizen will freely converse, will freely compare experience, and will freely tell each other how to live. Not that the distinction between them will have disappeared. It is a rich distinction, not to be minimized in any world that wants to keep on being simple and serious. But talking will take place ; and all the kinds of knowledge may then lie down with one another.



The Burden of the Presidency

CABELL PHILLIPS*

A MAN who ought to know—Harry S. Truman—said some years ago: “No one man can really fill the Presidency. [It] is an executive job that is almost fantastic. No absolute monarch has ever had such decisions to make or the responsibilities that the President of the United States has.”

Mr. Truman, who was himself President at the time, was merely voicing what virtually every other Chief Executive of the United States before him has felt and said about the office. Thomas Jefferson, the third President, described it as “a splendid misery,” and Woodrow Wilson, the twenty-eighth, mused that “there are blessed intervals when I forget by one means or another that I am President of the United States.”

It is, indeed, “the most difficult job in the world,” a complex of responsibilities and frustrations, set in a framework of insistent and ever-expanding aspirations, that is without parallel in the social history of mankind. While kings, emperors and dictators, from Caesar Augustus to Stalin, have all had their burdens of sovereignty, none has been fettered, on the one hand, by the moral and constitutional restraints of an American President nor weighted, on the other, by his global obligations. A modern President of the United States is not merely the executive of history’s greatest democracy, he literally holds in his hands the fate of the civilized world.

The Founding Fathers created something new when they wrote Article II of the Constitution: “The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States” There had never been a political office quite like it. They also created an enigma which is likely never to be fully resolved: What are executive powers and

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where are they to be delimited from legislative powers? These questions have been a perpetual source of conflict between the White House and the Congress. Some Presidents have used that conflict as a strait jacket of passivity. Others have found in it a release for their greatest energies and imagination, and in so doing have added substantially to their own powers and responsibilities and to those of every President to follow.

From George Washington through John Quincy Adams, the sixth man to hold the office, there was a degree of collaboration between the Executive and the Legislative branches that has not been equaled since. The Presidents of that era, Jefferson in particular, regarded the Congress as an almost equal participant in executive matters while retaining its exclusive primacy in the legislative field. Andrew Jackson, the seventh President, demolished this concept through the substitution of party government, with the inevitable frictions generated by a party leader in the White House whose influence reached far beyond the halls of Congress. Jackson successfully asserted the equal power of the Executive with the other two branches, and Lincoln, improving upon it, was called a dictator. In the three decades after Lincoln's assassination, the power of the President was all but submerged and the Congress was dominant.

The contemporary pattern of an aggressive as opposed to a passive role for the Presidency was set by Theodore Roosevelt's "stewardship" doctrine. In his autobiography he wrote: "The most important factor in getting the right spirit in my administration . . . was my insistence upon the theory that the executive power was limited only by specific restrictions and prohibitions appearing in the Constitution or imposed by the Congress under its constitutional powers . . . I declined to adopt the view that what was imperatively necessary for the nation could not be done by the President unless he could find some specific authorization to do it . . . I did not usurp power, but I did greatly broaden the use of executive power . . ."

Each accretion of Presidential power, whether by statute, by usurpation from the legislative or by simply moving boldly in to fill

a vacuum, has added new burdens and new responsibilities for Presidents. Once acquired, they are not easily shed. Moreover, the country's expanding role in foreign affairs has added almost a new dimension to the Presidential office, as the whole scope of government has doubled and trebled in the past 50 years. Its proliferating controls have tended to concentrate ever more firmly in the President's hands.

"The President not only reigns ; he also rules," Sidney Hyman has written in "The American Presidency." "He is and he does. Here is a basic cause of tension. He combines the sentimental aura of the crown with the workaday labor of a unitary prime minister-ship. He suggests the qualities of timeliness. But he is also a force in continuous operation. He sifts, defines, chooses from among alternatives, and he exercises his own will to decide what the national purpose shall be and how it shall be met. And it is because he is exalted in this institutional aspect that he has a greater distance to fall as an executive"—surely another cause of tension.

A President wears four ceremonial hats which he must change many times a day without noticeable loss of pace.

First of all, he is Chief Executive. Among his Constitutional injunctions is : "He shall take care that the laws be faithfully executed." To give effect to this mandate, the Federal bureaucracy was created to carry out, in the name of the President, the normal day-to-day activities of the Government.

A measure of the staggering physical magnitude of this responsibility was given in the first report of the commission headed by former President Herbert Hoover, which found that the President was expected to exert ultimate control over the work of nine (now 10) major departments, 104 bureaus, 12 sections, 108 services, 51 branches, 460 offices, 631 divisions, 19 administrations, 6 agencies, 16 areas, 40 boards, 6 commands, 20 commissions, 19 corporations, 5 groups, 10 headquarters, 3 authorities and 263 miscellaneous units of government not otherwise classifiable. (This awesome catalogue has, fortunately, been somewhat compressed in recent years.)

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As Chief Executive, the President is also the principal organ of our foreign relations. He, alone, is qualified to deal with foreign governments. This intercourse is a world-wide web of political, military and commercial relationships which, in the years of war and "cold war," has attained a level of importance to our national security almost equal to that of domestic affairs. In the delicate manipulation of this vast international power, the President of the United States, more than any other individual, has the potentiality for preserving the peace or plunging the world into a war of annihilation. No matter how many aides a Chief Executive may have to help him with his job, he alone bears the responsibility for its success or failure.

Next, the President is Commander in Chief of the armed forces. This traditionally has meant one thing in war and another in peace, but in the uneasy non-war that has prevailed since 1945, the distinction has been more one of degree than of substance.

The roles of Commander in Chief and Chief Executive inevitably overlap, for military strategy, particularly in a "cold war," coincides at many points with foreign policy. It also vitally affects the domestic economy. A President today no longer can put his military problems in a tidy separate compartment; they must be treated in the whole context of his Presidential responsibility.

The President is also Chief of State. This is both a ceremonial and a practical function of the Presidency. In the ceremonial sense, he is the symbol of authority, the focus of our sentiments of patriotism and national dignity. The President, whoever he may be, epitomizes for most of us—and to the world at large—the vitality and the continuity of what, for lack of a better phrase, we call "The American Way of Life."

This is an important and an exhausting obligation, for it puts heavy demands upon a President's time and physical resources. There are literally hundreds of applications daily for interviews with the President, requests for a speech or a message of greeting, or pleas of one kind or another to get him personally identified with a cause or an event.

In the practical sense, the Chief of State must formulate and articulate what he conceives to be the dominant interests of the nation. Through his budget, his various legislative messages to the Congress, his formal statements and his press conferences, he must give form and direction to his program which, for all practical purposes, is the nation's program. He must detect and be responsive to the ebb and flow of public opinion, and he is a powerful factor in the molding of that opinion. This, too, is an exacting obligation.

Finally, a President is Leader of his political party. This is not so trivial a responsibility as it may seem. The American political system is based on parties and the party principle is integral with the American system of government. Presidents have managed, with varying success to govern independently of their parties, and President Eisenhower's experience with the last Congress can be cited as a case in point. Fundamentally, however, a President is dependent upon the support and discipline of his own party men, in the Congress and in positions of influence among the public, to win acceptance of his program. He is the chief cohesive force in his party organization, and only he can provide the leadership to keep it vigorous and effective.

In the discharge of these vast executive functions and in the management of his awesome responsibilities, a President, unless he is an extraordinarily callous man, is under relentless emotional pressures. He knows that his every word, his every inflection even, is subject to probing interpretation. A thoughtless comment can reverberate like a peal of thunder.

He knows, too, that he is incapable of penetrating to the bottom of every problem that comes to him for decision. He must depend upon the integrity and the judgment of a great many other people in reaching a decision. He cannot always be sure in his own mind that it is the right decision. He can never get completely away from his job or escape the aura of his office. His health, his habits, his relaxations and even his appetite are all in the public domain.

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Weariness, disillusionment and despair are the tarnished trophies most Presidents have taken away from the White House. "I am tired of an office," Jefferson said as the end of his second term approached, "where I can do no more good than many others who would be glad to be employed in it. To myself, personally, it brings nothing but unceasing drudgery and daily loss of friends."

Presidents have tried in various ways to find an escape from the erosive effects of the Presidency. Wilson frequented the theatre, played sedately at golf and took occasional brief cruises on the yacht, *MAYFLOWER*. Throughout his second term, he complained, in talks and letters to friends, of the loneliness and the intellectual poverty of his existence in the White House, and of the unremitting toil that it entailed. Before the term ended, he had broken utterly under the strain and the disappointments of the failure of his plans for the League of Nations.

Warren G. Harding, the twenty-ninth President who was a man of amiable but shallow talents, never worried overmuch about anything until the treachery of his friends engulfed him. The 1920's were placid years and there was little to trouble him during the first half of his term. The Presidency brought him a host of wealthy, fawning—and largely unscrupulous—companions with whom he delighted to play golf. His world exploded in a series of scandals and suicides that shattered his simple faith and killed him.

Calvin Coolidge remained as inscrutable an ex-President as he had been as President, so that his views on the tribulations of office are largely unknown. He was, unquestionably, the most passive and apathetic President of this century, and it is improbable that the burdens of office ever depressed him unduly. Such relief as he required, however, he obtained in exercise on his electric horse and on long, tranquil vacations in Vermont and the Black Hills of South Dakota.

President Hoover pursued his recreations, such as they were, with the same methodical, humorless drive that he applied to problems of state. His "medicine-ball cabinet," a group of officials

who met regularly with him on the White House lawn for a form of calisthenics, supplied newswriters of the period with a text whenever other sources ran dry. He established a rustic retreat on the Rapidan River, in the Virginia foothills, where he often went in the summer to meditate, to confer and to fish for trout.

If Franklin D. Roosevelt had lived to be an ex-President, it is probable that he would have looked back upon his years in the White House with the same nostalgic pleasure that his distant cousin, Theodore, did, who said : " I had a corking time in the White House. I shall miss having my hand on the lever of the great machine."

F. D. R. was a political artist and he took an artist's delight in his work. The big problems, issues and controversies that came to him merely whetted his appetite for more. He was never bored for the reason that he never bothered with the boresome trifles. As these pyramided out of all proportions, he created the first administrative mechanism capable of coping with them and of keeping them out of his way.

More to refresh himself than to escape, he made frequent retreats to his Hyde Park, New York, home, to Warm Springs, Georgia (for rest and therapy), out to sea on the MAYFLOWER or a Navy destroyer, or roamed at large over the nation and the world. The term " work-and-play vacation " had not then been coined, but in every sense this is what such periods were, for the job of being President absorbed and enlivened each moment of his life. Franklin Roosevelt's enthusiasm never seemed to lag, even after three terms in the White House and five years of war, but his strength did. One of his biographers has guessed that had he retired in 1944 and slowed down to the pace of an elder statesman, he would have lived to be 80.

Though Mr. Truman exhibits few scars of his many battles in the White House, he has been among the most emphatic in condemning its man-killing potential.

How to relieve the President of some of these backbreaking burdens has engaged the attention of experts for a long time. It has

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been attacked piecemeal at various intervals since the days of the first Roosevelt. The most significant progress was made with the creation of the Executive Office of the President, in 1939, that brought the Bureau of the Budget, a greatly augmented personal staff and certain other administrative machinery together to extend the President's reach and grasp. Subsequent reorganization acts have given the President today wide authority to effect almost any type of organization within his personal staff that suits him.

President Eisenhower has availed himself fully of this opportunity. The staff and staff system that he has installed at the White House is best likened to the "chain-of-command" technique of the military, where areas of responsibility and channels of communication are rigidly delineated.

As presently constituted, there is a "Chief of Staff" (Sherman Adams, whose real title is the Assistant to the President); seven deputies (with various official titles) responsible for as many major areas of White House operations; six "special assistants" assigned to certain large fields of Government policy, a staff secretary and a Cabinet secretary. There are altogether about 250 persons, clerks and stenographers included, in the immediate staff.

This staff is the corps of personal aides to the President within the larger compass of the Executive Office. Its function is to dispose of every chore, every controversy and every administrative decision that can possibly be kept away from the President's desk. It has done that job with remarkable efficiency—so much so, in fact, that it has led to widespread criticism.

Whatever the validity of these complaints, the demonstrable fact is that the staff system as presently developed has achieved a great measure of that freedom from routine that every student of the Presidency has asserted was necessary. Staff systems and tables of organizations, however, are aimed more at the form than at the substance of the problem of the Presidency. They cannot take away, even if they ameliorate, the heavy burden of responsibility and the anxiety that often goes with it.

Goals of the International Geophysical Year

WILLIAM BARRY FURLONG*

IN July 1957, history's most intensive cross-examination of nature will get under way. This thoughtful, well-planned questioning will last 18 months and enlist thousands of scientists in more than 50 nations. The answers may well constitute the most significant and profound discoveries in the physical sciences in the next half century.

The project : the International Geophysical Year (IGY). The examiners : at least 5,000 of the world's most distinguished scientists. The field of examination : our environment.

The international impact of the Geophysical Year already has been demonstrated. It was the harbinger of the brief spring in the chill winter of relations between the Communists and the free world. Long before the Soviet Union or Communist China made any comparable diplomatic overtures, they came forward to join the other nations of the world in IGY.

IGY is the wedge that is prying open a new continent. Antarctica will bristle with a dozen bases operated by different nations during this super-year of science. IGY also is the catapult toward new frontiers in space. The United States and the Soviet Union have announced that they plan to launch the first earth satellites during IGY. Yet the meaning of IGY, and with it geophysics, has largely eluded the public.

What is geophysics? Quite literally, "earth science," the scientific study of our planet among the stars. Geophysics embraces a number of sciences, most of them intimately familiar to the average

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person—meteorology (study of the weather), oceanology (study of the seas), seismology (study of earthquakes and the interior of the earth), and a number of others. During IGY, some 14 sciences will be used as tools to explore our environment. They all focus on the world about us—on the surface of the earth, on the atmosphere enveloping the earth, and on the restless forces within it.

Their importance? "Our environment affects our lives in a variety of ways," says Dr. Joseph Kaplan, chief of the U.S. Committee on IGY, "from the clothes we wear to the safety of air travel." The airways that carry our radio and television signals, the weather that guides our lives, the level of the water in our wells or reservoirs—all these are a part of the gigantic science of geophysics.

Great industries are built on geophysics. The petroleum industry uses seismology to find new oil fields. The shipping industry uses—or fights—the tides in every port. The airline industry uses—or fights—the weather. Construction engineers in New South Wales, Australia, are using cosmic rays to determine the density and thickness of the ground above them as they burrow through tunnels.

Yet much of our environment still is shrouded in mystery. Physically, man's vertical range on the planet is only 21 miles—from the four-mile probings of the deepest oil well to the 17-mile flight of a rocket-propelled aircraft. Scientifically, his range extends for hundreds of millions of miles. But man still faces with quiet determination the questions of eloquent simplicity: "What is at the center of the earth?" "What makes the earth wobble?" "Is our climate slowly getting warmer?"

Many puzzling geophysical questions have interesting implications: Why do the boundaries of well-surveyed lots seem to shift with the passing of years? Why do seldom-visited islands seem to wander or appear as much as a mile off their mapped positions? What makes the Gulf Stream shift? Why is the force of gravitation greater in some places than in others?

The unexplained mysteries of our environment are the seeds of superstition. To the Eskimos, the northern lights are fearsome

spirits playing a game like soccer with a walrus skull ; in Estonian folk tales, they are weddings in the sky with sleighs and bangles and dancing lights. As understanding grows, superstition dwindles. But understanding grows slowly. Benjamin Franklin labored with a kite and a key to discover electricity—a geophysical experiment. Henry Hudson clambered ashore at Hudson Bay and slashed a mark in a rock at sea level ; three centuries later the mark is 60 feet above sea level—a geophysical bench mark. A pilot edged his plane into a hurricane to seek the hurricane's eye—a geophysical investigation.

All over the world, wherever science flowers, men are trying to roll back the shrouds of mystery that engulf our environment. Their investigations are as varied and daring as the human imagination. Some men are trying to find out what is at the center of the earth. Through sound waves, they hope to determine the exact composition of the earth beneath its 30-mile surface crust—how much of the interior is molten and how much is solid rock.

Some men are trying to find out how much the earth is warming up, how fast its glaciers are melting, and what will happen as a result. Will all the icebergs and glaciers and the sheath of ice cloaking Antarctica melt ? If so, how much will the level of the oceans rise ? Will our coastal cities be flooded ? Will new ports, now icebound, be opened for commerce ?

Some men are trying to find out why the earth wobbles, why it runs fast and slow. (It has been running fast since 1910.) Some of the reasons for its whimsies are known or suspected : it runs slow in May, by about .06 second, because of changes in wind current and ocean movements. It takes two seconds longer to make a complete revolution than it did 2,000 years ago because of greater tidal friction. Its north and south magnetic poles wander about uncertainly, causing changes in the boundaries of property and errors in navigation.

Some men are trying to find out whether the continents move and why. One theory is that the continents are " great rafts of plains and mountains " set upon dense but plastic bases that shift, almost

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imperceptibly, under their great load. One aim of IGY is to make a detailed study of latitude and longitude in order to check the movement of continents and to pinpoint any spot on earth to within 90 feet. The present margin of error is 200 to 300 feet or more.

Some men are trying to convert the energy from the sun into large electric power stations or into small units that could provide refrigeration in tropical countries, as well as pumps for irrigation and other uses. At least 25 countries now are experimenting with this idea. In India, a small solar cooker can be purchased for about \$16. In Algeria, the world's largest solar oven—one that converted the center of a magnesium firebrick into molten lava within seconds—is nearing completion.

All these investigations, all geophysical experiments, have one problem in common: they recognize no national boundaries. The winds blow and the oceans flow without regard to what nations they touch. The sun shines impartially on all. The Yangtze River floods China as implacably under the Communist regime as it did under the Nationalists and for reasons arising beyond China's boundaries. Magnetic storms sweep around the earth within a minute, sending navigational instruments into small but crazy gyrations, without inquiring as to the beliefs of the people below.

It long has been a problem to get enough data on an experiment when some vital phase of it is taking place somewhere else. The mail, telegraph, and radio have helped to ease the problem, but only slightly. What is needed is the simultaneous observation of geophysical phenomena all over the world, as well as the uninhibited exchange of this information.

This is the great vision behind IGY. On a spectacular scale, observations in the 14 different fields of science will be coordinated and the information exchanged. The effort comes at a peculiarly advantageous time: solar activity during IGY will be reaching its 11-year maximum.

The first attempt to organize the world's geophysical efforts was made almost 75 years ago when the first International Polar

Year explored the influence of the Arctic on the weather and investigated the aurora borealis and geomagnetism. The second attempt was made 25 years ago, in 1932-33, with the second International Polar Year. This effort included investigation of the ionosphere, an electric blanket that shrouds the globe, and its effect on telecommunications. "Without that knowledge, much of which we gathered in 1932-33, our telecommunications would be in a hopeless snarl," says Dr. Serge Korff of New York University. "The work that took place then opened a whole new era in telecommunications."

At first it was felt that these well-organized explorations of nature should take place every half century. But as the twentieth century turned into its sixth decade, the world of science was experiencing a new and luxurious era. Money was relatively plentiful; the depression had hampered the 1932-33 Polar Year. Besides, the new equipment now available for scientific research opened up dazzling possibilities. The tools for analyzing complex data, such as electronic computers, suddenly had provided us with amiable slaves that could do a decade's work in a few seconds. The opportunity was too glittering to ignore.

The idea of having IGY in 1957-58 was approved in 1951 by the International Council of Scientific Unions. The emphasis was extended from the polar areas to the world at large. Therefore, the name of the project was changed from the Polar Year to the International Geophysical Year. Dr. Sydney Chapman, English geophysicist, became chairman of the International Committee of IGY while Dr. Lloyd V. Berkner, who now is guiding the Brookhaven National Laboratories, near New York City, became vice chairman.

The roster of participating nations burgeoned swiftly. By the end of 1955, 46 nations had volunteered to cooperate. Some 41 of them already had outlined definite programs. Each nation must pay for its own program. The United States has appropriated \$12,000,000 for its effort (as against only \$30,000 in 1932-33), and this does not include some of the earth satellite research or the supply program for the Antarctic expedition. In the global total, at least

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\$100,000,000—probably two or three times that figure—will be spent.

The scientific program blossomed briskly. By the end of 1955, the component projects were mushrooming larger and larger each week. Following are some of the investigations which, during IGY, will be thoroughly coordinated.

Meteorology: Weather observations will be taken at 265 special stations from the North to the South Pole along three different pole-to-pole lines—80 degrees West, 10 degrees East, and 140 degrees East. Special efforts will be made to get more information about weather in the large, and about the circulation of air at high altitudes. In addition, ten consecutive days will be set aside each quarter for simultaneous weather observations all over the world.

Solar Activity: Sunspots and huge eruptions on the sun's surface, which dwarf the power of our volcanoes, will be studied. In fact, the sun will be under observation from some place in the world throughout every minute of IGY; at least one station will be ready always to pick up the observations as the sun passes from the view of other stations. Changes in its energy output will be carefully charted. In addition, a series of World Alerts will be held to speed a world-wide warning to all stations whenever the sun explodes into unusual activity.

Gravity: The strange variations in the force of gravity will be measured, particularly in South America and near both poles where little is known about this phenomenon. The direction as well as the pull of gravity will be determined at numerous points on the earth's surface. One result: the determination of the exact shape of the earth, which is neither a perfect globe nor perfectly unsymmetrical.

Latitude and Longitude Determination: At some 20 stations throughout the world, special tests will be made to pinpoint lines of latitude and longitude. The objective: to locate the exact spot of any point on the earth's surface, as well as to try to determine the shifting of the continents.

Glaciology: Glaciers still cover 10 per cent of the earth's land surface and can be found on every continent except Australia. Two huge glaciers—one in Greenland and the other in Antarctica—exert a great influence on weather, an influence not yet completely understood. Moreover, glaciers can reveal, through the organisms in their various layers, the condition of the climate eons ago and provide a greater understanding of the earth's history.

Airglow and Aurora: The garish curtains and streamers of light we call the aurora borealis and aurora australia, play a significant role in jamming radio communications. They are produced by the excitation of gases high in the atmosphere, a process similar to that which takes place in a neon sign. The timing and location of these phenomena will be studied, as well as the ionization process that gives birth to them.

Oceanography: Three-fourths of the earth's surface is water—the refuge of many mysteries of nature. Why are trillions of tons of Arctic water suddenly dumped into tropical seas, causing great upheavals in the sea and in the atmosphere overhead? Scientists will try to find the answer to this question through a study of the motion of the sea at very deep levels. They also will explore changes in the level of the sea and shifts in the tide. Some 30 stations, several at sea but most of them on islands, will be established to unlock the secrets of the sea.

Seismology: Though man is helpless in the vise of earthquakes (some 3,000 tremble through Chile in an average year), he can take steps to predict their course and severity. Furthermore, earthquake waves give clues to the structure of our planet. IGY scientists will study the cracks in the earth's surface and the places where great strains slowly gather force. Also under scrutiny will be the Antarctic and certain Pacific isles never before studied by seismologists. The point: to remove man from the grip of the earth's caprices and to tell him of its internal composition.

Geomagnetism: The atmospheric blanket surrounding the earth contains a magnetic field that erupts in massive storms affecting most

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navigational instruments—or at least their use—as well as many communication devices. Especially susceptible are short-wave, long-distance radio circuits. Fluctuations in the magnetic field, as well as the extent of the field, will be explored fully to find out more about the relations of the magnetic field with such other phenomena as cosmic rays, the ionosphere, and the aurora.

Ionospheric Physics : Fifty to 250 miles above the earth stretch layers of ionized gas. Because they reflect radio waves, they make radio communication possible. Though we use the ionosphere with considerable effect, there is much we must learn about it to remove some of the uncertainty of radio communication and find new uses for the ionosphere.

Cosmic Rays : Surprisingly little is known about cosmic rays—but we do know that they are valuable sources of research into the atom. They are simply fragments of atoms, travelling at incredible speeds, which bombard the earth from all directions. Frequently, they reach an energy level that overshadows what our man-made atom smashers generate. Their direction of approach and their intensities at various places can tell us much about the outer space they have traversed. A general, sustained attack on the mystery of the cosmic rays will be made, to learn more about the rays themselves and about the character of the space of our galaxy.

Exploration of the Upper Atmosphere : At least 600 rockets of different types will be fired into the upper atmosphere for a great variety of reasons—for studies of meteorology, cosmic rays, geomagnetism, the ionosphere, solar rays, and X-ray absorption in the high atmosphere. Instrument-carrying rockets will be fired from ground and ship stations as well as from high-flying balloons. The rockets will reach, at their peak, a point about 200 miles above the earth's surface.

One part of the last project has implications greater than IGY itself—the satellite program. The political overtones were illustrated when the satellite program of the United States was announced July 29, 1955. Within a few days, the Soviet Union announced that

it, too, would launch a satellite, without proposing, however, that it be included among the scientific studies of IGY. The scientific overtones are enormous : the use of earth satellites offers a whole new avenue for the exploration of our geophysical environment. When the satellite plan was announced, Dr. Berkner compared it with the first flight of the Wright brothers. " They took the first step by getting us into the air," said Dr. Berkner. " The satellite will provide the second step by going beyond the atmosphere into space."

When the program was announced, it was thought that a single satellite would circle the earth at a height of 200 miles and a speed of 18,000 miles per hour. Now, 12 satellites may be launched during IGY. Two or more may be launched simultaneously to circle the earth at a height of 200 to 800 miles. Some may girdle the equator, others the poles, and still others will slant across the equator at various angles.

The satellites will be self-destructive. As they slow down because of friction in the tenuous outer atmosphere, they will fall gradually back toward the earth. Eventually, they will hit the thick blanket of atmosphere and burn into dust. But before they do, they will provide valuable information of an unprecedented sort.

IGY also is providing the stimulus for crashing through the world's last earth-bound frontier—the Antarctic. Scientists know less about this huge continent, larger than the United States and Europe combined, than they know about the face of the moon. Some think they have spotted mountain peaks higher than Mount Everest. Some feel that, because coal lies beneath the sheath of ice, vegetation once thrived there. It is certain that useful minerals will be found in usable quantities in the exposed mountain areas and perhaps beneath the ice.

Many meteorologists suspect that the Antarctic is the reservoir of some of the world's freak weather. The Antarctic is the coldest area on earth, and above its high plateau hovers an accumulation of cold air that is " like a mass of shivering jelly." When a portion of this extremely cold air mass breaks off, it goes careening down the

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mountain slopes and on to the equator, scattering frigid weather in its path. Finally, if it locks in a gigantic clash with warmer air masses, its effect can spread up over South America as far as Buenos Aires or even Rio de Janeiro.

For more than a century after its discovery, Antarctica lay in dormant isolation. Only ten men ever stood at the South Pole. During IGY, 15 men are expected to be in residence at the South Pole. Several nations are planning bases and expeditions. The United States, with six bases, plans the largest effort. Already the U. S. Navy has moved equipment and supplies to the cold continent.

A series of Antarctic conferences have laid down plans for the establishment of a "Joint Weather Center" at Little America to assemble data from all of the bases and field parties. Daily weather maps will be drawn and the information transmitted to all stations. Likewise, a common communications system for the entire Antarctic area is partially in operation. The nations have agreed also on mutually supporting efforts in case rescue work is necessary, and they will join in assembling the transits over the continent that will enable the thickness of the icecap to be measured.

In Antarctica, as in space, there is a tingling expectation of new things to be found, new discoveries to be implemented. That is the spirit of IGY—the anticipation of great mysteries that can be solved for the benefit of mankind.



What's American About America?

JOHN A. KOUWENHOVEN*

THE discovery of America has never been a more popular pastime than it is today. Scarcely a week goes by without someone's publishing a new book of travels in the bright continent. The anthropologists, native and foreign, have discovered that the natives of Middletown and Plainville, U.S.A. are as amazing and as interesting as the natives of such better known communities as the Trobriand Islands and Samoa. Magazines here and abroad provide a steady flow of articles by journalists, historians, sociologists, and philosophers who want to explain America to itself, or to themselves, or to others.

The discoverers of America have, of course, been describing their experiences ever since Captain John Smith wrote his first book about America almost 350 years ago. But as Smith himself noted, not everyone "who hath bin at Virginia, understandeth or knowes what Virginia is." Indeed, just a couple of years ago the Carnegie Corporation, which supports a number of college programs in American Studies, entitled its Quarterly Report "Who Knows America?" and went on to imply that nobody does, not even "our lawmakers, journalists, civic leaders, diplomats, teachers, and others."

There is, of course, the possibility that some of the writers who have explored, vicariously or in person, this country's past and present may have come to understand or know what America really is. But how is the lay inquirer and the student to know which accounts to trust? Especially since most of the explorers seem to have found not one but two or more antipodal and irreconcilable

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Americas. The Americans, we are convincingly told, are the most materialistic of peoples, and, on the other hand, they are the most idealistic : the most revolutionary, and conversely, the most conservative ; the most rampantly individualistic, and, simultaneously, the most gregarious and herd-like ; the most irreverent toward their elders, and, contrariwise, the most abject worshippers of "Mom." They have an unbridled admiration of everything big, from bulldozers to bosoms ; and they are in love with everything diminutive, from the "small hotel" in the song to the little woman in the kitchen.

Maybe, as Henry James thought when he wrote *The American Scene*, it is simply that the country is "too large for any human convenience," too diverse in geography and in blood strains to make sense as any sort of unit. Whatever the reason, the conflicting evidence turns up wherever you look, and the observer has to content himself with some sort of pluralistic conception. The philosopher Santayana's way out was to say that the American mind was split in half, one half symbolized by the skyscraper, the other by neat reproductions of Colonial mansions (with surreptitious modern conveniences).

"The American will," he concluded, "inhabits the skyscraper ; the American intellect inherits the Colonial mansion." Mark Twain also defined the split in architectural terms, but more succinctly : American houses, he said, had Queen Anne fronts and Mary Ann behinds.

And yet, for all the contrarities, there remains something which I think we all feel to be distinctively American, some quality or characteristic underlying the polarities which—as Henry James himself went on to say—makes the American way of doing things differ more from any other nation's way than the ways of any two other Western nations differ from each other.

I am aware of the risks in generalizing. And yet it would be silly, I am convinced, to assert that there are not certain things which are more American than others. Take the New York City skyline, for example—that ragged man-made Sierra at the eastern edge of the continent. Clearly, in the minds of immigrants and returning

travelers, in the iconography of the ad-men who use it as a backdrop for the bourbon and airplane luggage they are selling, in the eyes of poets and of military strategists, it is one of the prime American symbols.

Let me start, then, with the Manhattan skyline and list a few things which occur to me as distinctively American. Then, when we have the list, let us see what, if anything, these things have in common. Here are a dozen items to consider :

1. The Manhattan skyline
2. The gridiron town plan
3. The skyscraper
4. The Model-T Ford
5. Jazz
6. The Constitution
7. Mark Twain's writing
8. Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*
9. Comic strips
10. Soap operas
11. Assembly-line production
12. Chewing gum

Here we have a round dozen artifacts which are, it seems to me, recognizably American, not likely to have been produced elsewhere. Granted that some of us take more pleasure in some of them than in others—that many people prefer soap opera to *Leaves of Grass* while others think Mark Twain's storytelling is less offensive than chewing gum—all twelve items are, I believe, widely held to be indigenous to our culture. The fact that many people in other lands like them too, and that some of them are nearly as acceptable overseas as they are here at home, does not in any way detract from their obviously American character. It merely serves to remind us that to be American does not mean to be inhuman—a fact which, in certain moods of self-criticism, we are inclined to forget.

What, then, is the "American" quality which these dozen items share? And what can that quality tell us about the character of our culture, about the nature of our civilization?

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Those engaged in discovering America often begin by discovering the Manhattan skyline, and here as well as elsewhere they discover apparently irreconcilable opposites. They notice at once that it doesn't make any sense, in human or aesthetic terms. It is the product of insane politics, greed, competitive ostentation, megalomania, the worship of false gods. Its products, in turn, are traffic jams, bad ventilation, noise, and all the other ills that metropolitan flesh is heir to. And the net result is, illogically enough, one of the most exaltedly beautiful things man has ever made.

Perhaps this paradoxical result will be less bewildering if we look for a moment at the formal and structural principles which are involved in the skyline. It may be helpful to consider the skyline as we might consider a lyric poem, or a novel, if we were trying to analyze its aesthetic quality.

Looked at in this way, it is clear that the total effect which we call "the Manhattan skyline" is made up of almost innumerable buildings, each in competition (for height, or glamor, or efficiency, or respectability) with all of the others. Each goes its own way, as it were, in a carnival of rugged architectural individualism. And yet—as witness the universal feeling of exaltation and aspiration which the skyline as a whole evokes—out of this irrational, unplanned, and often infuriating chaos, an unforeseen unity has evolved. No building ever built in New York was placed where it was, or shaped as it was, because it would contribute to the aesthetic effect of the skyline—lifting it here, giving it mass there, or lending a needed emphasis. Each was built, all those now under construction are being built, with no thought for their subordination to any over-all effect.

What, then, makes possible the fluid and ever-changing unity which does in fact, exist? Quite simply, there are two things, both simple in themselves, which do the job. If they were not simple, they would not work; but they are, and they do.

One is the gridiron pattern of the city's streets — the same basic pattern which accounts for Denver, Houston, Little Rock,

Birmingham, and almost any American town you can name, and the same pattern which, in the form of square townships, sections, and quarter sections, was imposed by the Ordinance of 1785 on an almost continental scale. Whatever its shortcomings when compared with the "discontinuous street patterns" of modern planned communities, this artificial geometric grid—imposed upon the land without regard to contours or any preconceived pattern of social zoning—had at least the quality of rational simplicity. And it is this simple gridiron street pattern which, horizontally, controls the spacing and arrangement of the rectangular shafts which go to make up the skyline.

The other thing which holds the skyline's diversity together is the structural principle of the skyscraper. When we think of individual buildings, we tend to think of details of texture, color, and form, of surface ornamentation or the lack of it. But as elements in Manhattan's skyline, these things are of little consequence. What matters there is the vertical thrust, the motion upward; and that is the product of cage or skeleton, construction in steel—a system of construction which is, in effect, merely a three-dimensional variant of the gridiron street plan, extending vertically instead of horizontally.

The aesthetics of cage, or skeleton, construction have never been fully analyzed, nor am I equipped to analyze them. But as a lay observer, I am struck by fundamental differences between the effect created by height in the RCA building at Radio City, for example, and the effect created by height in Chartres cathedral or in Giotto's campanile. In both the latter (as in all the great architecture of the past) proportion and symmetry, the relation of height to width, are constituent to the effect. One can say of a Gothic cathedral, this tower is too high; of a Romanesque dome, this is top-heavy. But there is nothing inherent in cage construction which would invite such judgments. A true skyscraper like the RCA building could be eighteen or twenty stories taller, or ten or a dozen stories shorter without changing its essential aesthetic effect. Once steel cage

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construction has passed a certain height, the effect of transactive upward motion has been established ; from there on, the point at which you cut it off is arbitrary and makes no difference.

Those who are familiar with the history of the skyscraper will remember how slowly this fact was realized. Even Louis Sullivan—greatest of the early skyscraper architects—thought in terms of having to close off and climax the upward motion of the tall building with an “attic” or cornice. His lesser contemporaries worked for years on the blind assumption that the proportion and symmetry of masonry architecture must be preserved in the new technique. If with the steel cage one could go higher than with load bearing masonry walls, the old aesthetic effects could be counterfeited by dressing the façade as if one or more buildings had been piled on top of another—each retaining the illusion of being complete in itself. You can still see such buildings in New York : the first five stories perhaps a Greco-Roman temple, the next ten a neuter warehouse, and the final five or six an Aztec pyramid. And that Aztec pyramid is simply a cheap and thoughtless equivalent of the more subtle Sullivan cornice. Both structures attempt to close and climax the upward thrust, to provide something similar to the *Katharsis* in Greek tragedy.

But the logic of cage construction requires no such climax. It has less to do with the inner logic of masonry forms than with that of the old Globe-Wernicke sectional bookcases, whose interchangeable units (with glass-flap fronts) anticipated by fifty years the modular unit systems of so-called modern furniture. Those bookcases were advertised in the 'nineties as “always complete but never finished”—a phrase which could with equal propriety have been applied to the Model-T Ford. Many of us remember with affection that admirably simple mechanism, forever susceptible to added gadgets or improved parts, each of which was interchangeable with what you already had.

Here, then, are the two things which serve to tie together the otherwise irrelevant components of the Manhattan skyline : the

gridiron ground plan and the three-dimensional vertical grid of steel cage construction. And both of these are closely related to one another. Both are composed of simple and infinitely repeatable units.

It was the French architect, Le Corbusier, who described New York's architecture as "hot jazz in stone and steel." At first glance this may sound as if it were merely a slick updating of Schelling's "Architecture . . . is frozen music," but it is more than that if one thinks in terms of the structural principles we have been discussing and the structural principles of jazz.

Let me begin by making clear that I am using the term jazz in its broadest significant application. There are circumstances in which it is important to define the term with considerable precision, as when you are involved in discussion with a disciple of one of the many cults, orthodox or progressive, which devote themselves to some particular subspecies of jazz. But in our present context we need to focus upon what all the subspecies (Dixieland, Bebop, Swing, or Cool Jazz) have in common; in other words, we must neglect the by no means uninteresting qualities which differentiate one from another, since it is what they have in common which can tell us most about the civilization which produced them.

There is no definition of jazz, academic or otherwise, which does not acknowledge that its essential ingredient is a particular kind of rhythm. Improvisation is also frequently mentioned as an essential; but even if it were true that jazz always involves improvisation, that would not distinguish it from a good deal of Western European music of the past. It is the distinctive rhythm which differentiates all types of jazz from all other music and which gives to all of its types a basic family resemblance.

It is not easy to define that distinctive rhythm. Winthrop Sargeant has described it as the product of two superimposed devices: syncopation and polyrhythm, both of which have the effect of constantly upsetting rhythmical expectations. André Hodeir, in his recent analysis of *Jazz: Its Evolution and Essence*, speaks of "an

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unending alternation" of syncopations and of notes played *on* the beat, which "gives rise to a kind of expectation that is one of jazz's subtlest effects."

As you can readily hear, if you listen to any jazz performance (whether of the Louis Armstrong, Benny Goodman, or Charlie Parker variety), the rhythmical effect depends upon there being a clearly defined basic rhythmic pattern which enforces the expectations which are to be upset. That basic pattern is the 4/4 or 2/4 beat which underlies all jazz. Hence the importance of the percussive instruments in jazz: the drums, the guitar or banjo, the bull fiddle, the piano. Hence too the insistent thump, thump, thump, thump which is so boring when you only half-hear jazz—either because you are too far away, across the lake or in the next room, or simply because you will not listen attentively. But hence also the delight, the subtle effects, which good jazz provides as the melodic phrases evade, anticipate, and return to, and then again evade the steady basic four-beat pulse which persists, implicitly or explicitly, throughout the performance.

In other words, the structure of a jazz performance is, like that of the New York skyline, a tension of cross-purposes. In jazz at its characteristic best, each player seems to be—and has the sense of being—on his own. Each goes his own way, inventing rhythmic and melodic patterns which, superficially, seem to have as little relevance to one another as the United Nations building does to the Empire State. And yet the outcome is a dazzlingly precise creative unity.

In jazz that unity of effect is, of course, the result of the very thing which each of the players is flouting: namely, the basic 4/4 beat—that simple rhythmic gridiron of identical and infinitely extendible units which holds the performance together. As Louis Armstrong once wrote, you would expect that if every man in a band "had his own way and could play as he wanted, all you would get would be a lot of jumbled up, crazy noise." But, as he goes on to say, that does not happen, because the players know "by ear and sheer musical instinct" just when to leave the underlying pattern and when to get back on it.

What it adds up to, as I have argued elsewhere, is that jazz is the first art form to give full expression to Emerson's ideal of a union which is perfect only "when all the uniters are isolated." That Emerson's ideal is deeply rooted in our national experience need not be argued. Frederick Jackson Turner quotes a letter written by a frontier settler to friends back East, which in simple, unself-conscious words expresses the same reconciling of opposites. "It is a universal rule here," the frontiersman wrote, "to help one another, each one keeping an eye single to his own business."

One need only remember that the Constitution itself, by providing for a federation of separate units, became the infinitely extendible framework for the process of reconciling liberty and unity over vast areas and conflicting interests. Its seven brief articles, providing for checks and balances between interests, classes, and branches of the government establish, in effect, the underlying beat which gives momentum and direction to a political process which Richard Hofstadter has called "a harmonious system of mutual frustration" —a description which fits a jazz performance as well as it fits our politics.

The aesthetic effects of jazz, as Winthrop Sargeant long ago suggested, have as little to do with symmetry and proportion as have those of a skyscraper. Like the skyscraper, a jazz performance does not build to an organically required climax; it can simply cease. The "piece" which the musicians are playing may, and often does, have a rudimentary Aristotelian pattern of beginning, middle, and end; but the jazz performance need not. In traditional Western European music, themes are developed. In jazz they are toyed with and dismantled. There is no inherent reason why the jazz performance should not continue for another 12 or 16 or 24 or 32 measures (for these are the rhythmic cages which in jazz correspond to the cages of a steel skeleton in architecture). As in the skyscraper, the aesthetic effect is one of motion, in this case horizontal rather than vertical.

Jazz rhythms create what can only be called momentum. When the rhythm of one voice (say the trumpet, off on a rhythmic and

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melodic excursion) lags behind the underlying beat, its four-beat measure carries over beyond the end of the underlying beat's measure into the succeeding one, which has already begun. Conversely, when the trumpet anticipates the beat, it starts a new measure before the steady underlying beat has ended one. And the result is an exhilarating forward motion which the jazz trumpeter Wingy Manone once described as "feeling an increase in tempo though you're still playing at the same tempo." Hence the importance in jazz of timing, and hence the delight and amusement of the so-called "break," in which the basic 4/4 beat ceases and a soloist goes off on a flight of rhythmic and melodic fancy which nevertheless comes back surprisingly and unerringly to encounter the beat precisely where it would have been if it had kept going.

Once the momentum is established, it can continue until—after an interval dictated by some such external factor as the conventional length of phonograph records or the endurance of dancers—it stops. And as if to guard against any Aristotelian misconceptions about an end, it is likely to stop on an unresolved chord, so that harmonically as well as rhythmically everything is left up in the air. Even the various coda-like devices employed by jazz performers at dances, such as the corny old "without a shirt" phrase of blessed memory, are harmonically unresolved. They are merely conventional ways of saying "we quit," not, like Beethoven's insistent codas, ways of saying, "There now ; that ties off all the loose ends ; I'm going to stop now ; done ; finished ; concluded ; signed, sealed, delivered."

Thus far, in our discussion of distinctively "American" things, we have focused chiefly upon twentieth-century items. But the references to the rectangular grid pattern of cities and townships and to the Constitution should remind us that the underlying structural principles with which we are concerned are deeply embedded in our civilization. To shift the emphasis, therefore, let us look at item number 7 on our list : Mark Twain's writing.

Mark's writing was, of course, very largely the product of oral influences. He was a born story-teller, and he always insisted that

the oral form of the humorous story was high art. Its essential tool (or weapon), he said, is the pause—which is to say, timing. “If the pause is too long the impressive point is passed,” he wrote, “and the audience have had time to divine that a surprise is intended—and then you can’t surprise them, of course.” In other words, he saw the pause as a device for upsetting expectations, like the jazz “break.”

Mark, as you know, was by no means a formal perfectionist. In fact he took delight in being irreverent about literary form. Take, for example, his account of the way *Pudd’nhead Wilson* came into being. It started out to be a story called “Those Extraordinary Twins,” about a youthful freak consisting, as he said, of “a combination of two heads and four arms joined to a single body and a single pair of legs—and I thought I would write an extravagantly fantastic little story with this freak of nature for hero—or heroes—a silly young miss [named Rowena] for heroine, and two old ladies and two boys for the minor parts.”

But as he got writing the tale, it kept spreading along and other people began intruding themselves—among them Pudd’nhead, and a woman named Roxana, and a young fellow named Tom Driscoll, who—before the book was half finished—had taken things almost entirely into their own hands and were “working the whole tale as a private venture of their own.”

From this point, I want to quote Mark directly, because in the process of making fun of fiction’s formal conventions he employs a technique which is the verbal equivalent of the jazz “break”—a technique of which he was a master.

When the book was finished, and I came to look round to see what had become of the team I had originally started out with—Aunt Patsy Cooper, Aunt Betsy Hale, the two boys, and Rowena the light-weight heroine—they were nowhere to be seen; they had disappeared from the story some time or other. I hunted about and found them—found them stranded, idle, forgotten, and permanently useless. It was very awkward. It was awkward all around; but more particularly in the case of Rowena, because there was a love match on, between her and one of the twins that constituted the freak, and I had worked it up to a blistering heat and

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thrown in a quite dramatic love quarrel [now watch Mark take off like a jazz trumpeter flying off on his own in a fantastic break] wherein Rowena scathingly denounced her betrothed for getting drunk, and scoffed at his explanation of how it had happened, and wouldn't listen to it, and had driven him from her in the usual " forever " way ; and now here she sat crying and broken-hearted ; for she had found that he had spoken only the truth ; that it was not he but the other half of the freak, that had drunk the liquor that made him drunk ; that her half was a prohibitionist and had never drunk a drop in his life, and, although tight as a brick three days in the week, was wholly innocent of blame ; and, indeed, when sober was constantly doing all he could to reform his brother, the other half, who never got any satisfaction out of drinking anyway, because liquor never affected him. [Now he's going to get back on the basic beat again.] Yes, here she was, stranded with that deep injustice of hers torturing her poor heart.

Now I shall have to summarize again. Mark didn't know what to do with her. He couldn't just leave her there, of course, after making such a to-do over her ; he'd have to account to the reader for her somehow. So he finally decided that all he could do was " give her the grand bounce." It grieved him, because he'd come to like her after a fashion, " notwithstanding she was such an ass and said such stupid, irritating things and was so nauseatingly sentimental " ; but it had to be done. So he started Chapter Seventeen with : " Rowena went out in the back yard after supper to see the fireworks and fell down the well and got drowned."

It seemed abrupt, [Mark went on] but I thought maybe the reader wouldn't notice it, because I changed the subject right away to something else. Anyway, it loosened up Rowena from where she was stuck and got her out of the way, and that was the main thing. It seemed a prompt good way of weeding out people that had got stalled, and a plenty good enough way for those others ; so I hunted up the two boys and said they went out back one night to stone the cat and fell down the well and got drowned. Next I searched around and found Aunt Patsy Cooper and Aunt Betsy Hale where they were aground, and said they went out back one night to visit the sick and fell down the well and got drowned. I was going to drown some of the others, but I gave up the idea, partly because I believed that if I kept that up it would arouse attention, . . . and partly because it was not a large well and would not hold any more anyway.

That was a long excursion—but it makes the point: that Mark didn't have much reverence for conventional story structure. Even his greatest book, which is perhaps also the greatest book written on this continent—*Huckleberry Finn*—is troublesome. One can scarcely find a criticism of the book which does not object, for instance, to the final episodes, in which Tom rejoins Huck and they go through that burlesque business of "freeing" the old Negro Jim—who is, it turns out, already free. But, as T. S. Eliot was, I think, the first to observe, the real structure of *Huck Finn* has nothing to do with the traditional form of the novel—with exposition, climax, and resolution. Its structure is like that of the great river itself—without beginning and without end. Its structural units, or "cages," are the episodes of which it is composed. Its momentum is that of the tension between the river's steady flow and the eccentric superimposed rhythms of Huck's flights from, and near recapture by, the restricting forces of routine and convention.

It is not a novel of escape; if it were, it would be Jim's novel, not Huck's. Huck is free at the start, and still free at the end. Looked at in this way, it is clear that *Huckleberry Finn* has as little need of a "conclusion" as has a skyscraper or a jazz performance. Questions of proportion and symmetry are as irrelevant to its structure as they are to the total effect of the New York skyline.

There is not room here for more than brief reference to the other "literary" items on our list: Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, comic strips, and soap opera. Perhaps it is enough to remind you that *Leaves of Grass* has discomfited many a critic by its lack of symmetry and proportion, and that Whitman himself insisted: "I round and finish little, if anything; and could not, consistently with my scheme." As for the words of true poems, Whitman said in the "Song of the Answerer"—

They bring none to his or her terminus or to be content and full,
Whom they take they take into space to behold the birth of stars, to
learn one of the meanings,

To launch off with absolute faith, to sweep through the ceaseless
rings and never be quiet again.

Although this is not the place for a detailed analysis of Whitman's verse techniques, it is worth noting in passing how the rhythm of these lines reinforces their logical meaning. The basic rhythmical unit, throughout, is a three-beat phrase of which there are two in the first line (accents falling on *none*, *his*, and *term . . . be, tent, and full*), three in the second and in the third. Superimposed upon the basic three-beat measure there is a flexible, nonmetrical rhythm of colloquial phrasing. That rhythm is controlled in part by the visual effect of the arrangement in long lines, to each of which the reader tends to give equal duration, and in part by the punctuation within the lines.

It is the tension between the flexible, superimposed rhythms of the rhetorical patterns and the basic three-beat measure of the underlying framework which unites with the imagery and the logical meaning of the words to give the passage its restless, sweeping movement. It is this tension, and other analogous aspects of the structure of *Leaves of Grass* which give to the book that "vista" which Whitman himself claimed for it. If I may apply to it T. S. Eliot's idea about *Huckleberry Finn*, the structure of the *Leaves* is open at the end. Its key poem may well be, as D. H. Lawrence believed, the "Song of the Open Road."

As for the comics and soap opera, they too—on their own frequently humdrum level—have devised structures which provide for no ultimate climax, which come to no end demanded by symmetry or proportion. In them both there is a shift in interest away from the "How does it come out?" of traditional story telling to "How are things going?" In a typical installment of Harold Gray's *Orphan Annie*, the final panel shows Annie walking purposefully down a path with her dog, Sandy, saying: "But if we're goin', why horse around? It's a fine night for walkin' . . . C'mon, Sandy, . . . Let's go . . ." (It doesn't even end with a period, or full stop, but with the conventional three dots or suspension points, to indicate incompleteness.) So too, in the soap operas, *Portia Faces Life*, in one form or another, day after day, over and over again. And the operative word is the verb *faces*. It is the process of facing that matters.

Here, I think, we are approaching the central quality which all the diverse items on our list have in common. That quality I would define as a concern with process rather than with product—or, to re-use Mark Twain's words, a concern with the manner of handling experience or materials rather than with the experience or materials themselves. Emerson, a century ago, was fascinated by the way "becoming somewhat else is the perpetual game of nature." And this preoccupation with process is, of course, basic to modern science. "Matter" itself is no longer to be thought of as something fixed, but fluid and ever-changing. Similarly, modern economic theory has abandoned the "static equilibrium" analysis of the neo-classic economists, and in philosophy John Dewey's instrumentalism abandoned the classic philosophical interest in final causes for a scientific interest in "the mechanism of occurrences"—that is, process.

It is obvious, I think, that the American system of industrial mass production reflects this same focus of interest in its concern with production rather than products. And it is the mass-production system, *not* machinery, which has been America's contribution to industry.

In that system there is an emphasis different from that which was characteristic of handicraft production or even of machine manufacture. In both of these there was an almost total disregard of the means of production. The aristocratic ideal inevitably relegated interest in the means exclusively to anonymous peasants and slaves; what mattered to those who controlled and administered production was, quite simply, the finished product. In a mass-production system, on the other hand, it is the process of production itself which becomes the center of interest, rather than the product.

If we are aware of this fact, we usually regard it as a misfortune. We hear a lot, for instance, of the notion that our system "dehumanizes" the worker, turning him into a machine and depriving him of the satisfactions of finishing anything, since he performs only some repetitive operation. It is true that the unit of work in mass production is not a product but an operation. But the development of the system, in contrast with Charlie Chaplin's wonderful but wild

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fantasy of the assembly line, has shown the intermediacy of the stage in which the worker is doomed to frustrating boredom. Merely repetitive work, in the logic of mass production, can and must be done by machine. It is unskilled work which is doomed by it, not the worker. More and more skilled workers are needed to design products, analyze jobs, cut patterns, attend complicated machines, and co-ordinate the processes which comprise the productive system.

The skills required for these jobs are different, of course, from those required to make hand-made boots or to carve stone ornament, but they are not in themselves less interesting or less human. Operating a crane in a steel mill, or a turret lathe, is an infinitely more varied and stimulating job than shaping boots day after day by hand. A recent study of a group of workers on an automobile assembly line makes it clear that many of the men object, for a variety of reasons, to those monotonous, repetitive jobs which (as we have already noted) should be—but in many cases are not yet—done by machine; but those who *like* such jobs like them because they enjoy the process. As one of them said: "Repeating the same thing you can catch up and keep ahead of yourself . . . you can get in the swing of it." The report of members of a team of British workers who visited twenty American steel foundries in 1949 includes this description of the technique of "snatching" a steel casting with a magnet, maneuvered by a gantry crane running on overhead rails:

In its operation, the crane approaches a pile of castings at high speed with the magnet hanging fairly near floor level. The crane comes to a stop somewhere short of the castings, while the magnet swings forward over the pile, is dropped on to it, current switched on, and the hoist begun, at the same moment as the crane starts on its return journey. [And then, in words which might equally be applied to a jazz musician, the report adds:] The whole operation requires timing of a high order, and the impression gained is that the crane drivers derive a good deal of satisfaction from the swinging rhythm of the process.

This fascination with process has possessed Americans ever since Oliver Evans in 1785 created the first wholly automatic factory: a flour mill in Delaware in which mechanical conveyors—belt

conveyors, bucket conveyors, screw conveyors—are interlinked with machines in a continuous process of production. But even if there were no other visible sign of the national preoccupation with process, it would be enough to point out that it was an American who invented chewing gum (in 1869) and that it is the Americans who have spread it—in all senses of the verb—throughout the world. An absolutely non-consumable confection, its sole appeal is the process of chewing it.

The apprehensions which many people feel about a civilization absorbed with process—about its mobility and wastefulness as well as about the “dehumanizing” effects of its jobs—derive, I suppose, from old habit and the persistence of values and tastes which were indigenous to a very different social and economic system. Whitman pointed out in *Democratic Vistas* more than eighty years ago that America was a stranger in her own house, that many of our social institutions, like our theories of literature and art, had been taken over almost without change from a culture which was not, like ours, the product of political democracy and the machine. Those institutions and theories, and the values implicit in them, are still around, though some (like collegiate gothic, of both the architectural and intellectual variety) are less widely admired than formerly.

Change, or the process of consecutive occurrences, is, we tend to feel, a bewildering and confusing and lonely thing. All of us, in some moods, feel the “preference for the stable over the precarious and uncompleted” which, as John Dewey recognized, tempts philosophers to posit their absolutes. We talk fondly of the need for roots—as if man were a vegetable, not an animal with legs whose distinction it is that he can move and “get on with it.” We would do well to make ourselves more familiar with the idea that the process of development is universal, that it is “the form and order of nature.” As Lancelot Law Whyte has said, in *The Next Development in Man*:

Man shares the special form of the universal formative process which is common to all organisms, and herein lies the root of his unity with the rest of organic nature. While life is maintained, the component processes

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in man never attain the relative isolation and static perfection of inorganic processes The individual may seek, or believe that he seeks, independence, permanence, or perfection, but that is only through his failure to recognize and accept his actual situation.

As an "organic system" man cannot, of course, expect to achieve stability or permanent harmony, though he can create (and in the great arts of the past, has created) the illusion of them. What he can achieve is a continuing development in response to his environment. The factor which gives vitality to all the component processes in the individual and in society is "not permanence but development."

To say this is not to deny the past. It is simply to recognize that for a variety of reasons people living in America have, on the whole, been better able to relish process than those who have lived under the imposing shadow of the arts and institutions which Western man created in his tragic search for permanence and perfection—for a "closed system." They find it easy to understand what that very American philosopher William James meant when he told his sister that his house in Chocorua, New Hampshire, was "the most delightful house you ever saw; it has fourteen doors, all opening outwards." They are used to living in grid-patterned cities and towns whose streets, as Jean-Paul Sartre observed, are not, like those of European cities, "closed at both ends." As Sartre says in his essay on New York, the long straight streets and avenues of a gridiron city do not permit the buildings to "cluster like sheep" and protect one against the sense of space. "They are not sober little walks closed in between houses, but national highways. The moment you set foot on one of them, you understand that it has to go on to Boston or Chicago."

So, too, the past of those who live in the United States, like their future, is open-ended. It does not, like the past of most other people, extend downward into the soil out of which their immediate community or neighborhood has grown. It extends laterally backward across the plains, the mountains, or the sea to somewhere else,

just as their future may at any moment lead them down the open road, the endless-vistaed street.

Our history is the process of motion into and out of cities ; of westering and the counter-process of return ; of motion up and down the social ladder—a long, complex, and sometimes terrifyingly rapid sequence of consecutive change. And it is this sequence, and the attitudes and habits and forms which it has bred, to which the term “ America ” really refers.

“ America ” is not a synonym for the United States. It is not an artifact. It is not a fixed and immutable ideal toward which citizens of this nation strive. It has not order or proportion, but neither is it chaos except as that is chaotic whose components no single mind can comprehend or control. America is process. And in so far as people have been “ American ”—as distinguished from being (as most of us, in at least some of our activities, have been) mere carriers of transplanted cultural traditions—the concern with process has been reflected in the work of their heads and hearts and hands.



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THE GREAT EXPERIMENT : An Introduction to the History of the American People, by Frank Thistlethwaite. *Cambridge University Press*.

Reviewed by DONALD SHEEHAN

Written by an Englishman for British undergraduates, this brief introduction to American history contains little that is new to the specialist. Yet its form, content and judgments distinguish it favorably from conventional works designed for college students on this side of the Atlantic.

Thistlethwaite's purpose is to relate American development to that of Western Europe, especially of Great Britain, but also to point out the differences between Americans and Europeans. American writers have attempted similar tasks and have made familiar the importance of continuing migration—this author's particular emphasis—as a connecting link between Old World and New and as a primary cause of dissimilarities between them. The “uprooted” Europeans created an American society which remained culturally unresolved, heterogeneous, a “caravan on the move” even after the frontier closed and the Statue of Liberty turned its back.

Even if these themes lack originality, they gain depth and clarity from the persistence with which they are pursued. It is customary to describe waves of immigration, but it is this author's particular distinction to write a general survey in which Europe and its migrants form a continuous and integral part of American development, not an exotic footnote. In addition, the distinctiveness of America is made much clearer by the use of comparison. For example, one gets a fuller sense of American capitalism because it is placed alongside its British counterpart, whose special characteristics are also exposed to view.

The ease with which the author handles economic, even statistical material and his

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skill in presenting social history—both quantitatively and qualitatively weak in our own literature—are among the book's primary attractions. The descriptive material is placed in a comprehensive framework which is analytical in conception but which is presented without recourse to the social scientist's painful dialect. This work incorporates a sociologist's thesis, an economist's training, a historian's subject matter, and an Englishman's traditional gift of expression. It is a happy combination.

The author's approach leads to a topical organization which lends some freshness even to his treatment of staple textbook ingredients. For example, “The Conquest of the Greater West” covers material from 1845 to 1907 without the distraction of an exaggerated pause for the Civil War. The story of industrial growth forms a continuous narrative from 1850 to 1914.

Here, then, is no “presidential synthesis”. In fact, here are very few presidents or office-holders of any description. The references to political development seem less than minimal, although the number may be greater than it appears because the author's orientation results in their being scattered and subordinated to the social and economic analysis. This presents no difficulty for the well-informed, but one wonders whether there are enough facts to suggest the substance of American politics to a British undergraduate or even an American one. Such a conclusion as “the politics of the American mobile society remain comparatively free from institutional hardening” appears to require more than the slender foundation the author supplies.

One regrets to say that there are a number of errors of fact. To cite the Hawley-Smoot Tariff as an example of protectionism in 1920 (p. 280) may be relatively harmless. But giving Calhoun credit for helping to pass the Compromise of 1850 (p. 164) mars the sense of history. Such mistakes seem unnecessary when

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viewed in the light of the firm factual basis upon which the synthesis rests.

Naively perhaps, this reader was somewhat disappointed to find the foreign perspective so seldom apparent in the interpretation of matters in scholarly dispute. No doubt it is explained at least partly by the author's residence in American universities and his dependence, shared by all, upon monographs produced largely by scholars in this country. The latter seems especially true for the years down to the Civil War. Thistlethwaite writes with more confidence and independence about the more recent period.

It is in the treatment and evaluation of recent social trends that the author's beliefs become more conspicuous. He takes issue with those who describe the bankruptcy of the American political tradition and the sterility of a "single undifferentiated culture" of white-collar robots. Essentially a friendly observer, Thistlethwaite emphasizes the continuity of American development, in particular the way in which social mobility has been maintained and the individual has remained both the end and the means of a successful open society. He is aware of the pressures toward conformity and uncertain of the appropriateness of American ideals, attitudes and habits for solving the complex problems of the present. But the purpose of his book is to record not a failure but a "Great Experiment" which has achieved much and which continues to offer hope for the future.

CITIES IN THE WILDERNESS: The First Century of Urban Life in America, 1625-1742, by Carl Bridenbaugh, *Alfred A. Knopf*.

CITIES IN REVOLT: Urban Life in America, 1743-1776, by Carl Bridenbaugh, *Alfred A. Knopf*.

Reviewed by LEONARD W. LABAREE

The steadily increasing trend of the population of the United States away from the farm and rural countryside to the cities and their

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surrounding suburbs has been paralleled in some degree by a growing interest of American historians in those aspects of our past experience which are specifically urban. The history of particular communities or groups of communities, once almost the exclusive province of local antiquarians, has more and more engaged the attention of trained scholars endowed with a sense of perspective and equipped with a thorough understanding of historical backgrounds. Local history, and especially urban history, has been coming into its own.

No American historian has done more to advance this development than Carl Bridenbaugh, a distinguished authority on colonial America, who has lived or worked at various times in New England, the Middle Atlantic states, the South, and the Far West. Seventeen years ago he first published "Cities in the Wilderness," an investigation of the five largest colonial cities—Boston, Newport, New York, Philadelphia, and Charles Town (now Charleston)—to 1742. This useful book has long been out of print. Four years later he brought out under the title "Rebels and Gentlemen" a special study of Philadelphia in the age of Franklin. Now, with the aid of a new publisher, he has given us a second edition of "Cities in the Wilderness" together with its sequel, "Cities in Revolt," which carries the account of the same five communities down to the Declaration of Independence. No finer series on American urban experience in general over a long period of time is in existence.

The two books just published are the result of prodigious research and are stuffed—perhaps almost overstuffed—with significant information. Between them they divide the century and a half they cover into five shorter and more manageable periods and for each period discuss such topics as the physical characteristics of the five towns, the economic activities that centered in them, the social patterns that emerged, the special problems of urban communities—such as water supply, fire and police protection, and health controls

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—and the intellectual and cultural development of the city-dwellers. The five communities differed from each other in many of these respects, partly because of differences in geographical location, or political structure, or the economic characteristics of the back country on which their trade usually rested. Yet, in the overall view, their similarities were much more striking than their differences, and, what is perhaps even more important, by nearly every standard according to which a city may be described as “modern” or “progressive,” these colonial cities excelled all the English provincial cities of the time and were surpassed “at home” only by the metropolis London.

Professor Bridenbaugh's volumes, and especially the second one, are, however, much more than a mere catalogue of facts regarding American colonial cities. They constitute, as well, a fresh and original approach to an understanding of some of the underlying causes of the American Revolution. The author believes that the growing maturity of American culture, which explains in large measure the restlessness and discontent of the colonists under British controls and restraints, was in most of its important manifestations a phenomenon of urban society rather than of the rural areas. He holds that a large proportion of the agencies through which that discontent was organized and found expression were agencies of city rather than of country life.

Not every historian, and especially not every devoted admirer of Virginia planter society, will wholly agree with the importance he attaches to the cities as focal centers of the preparatory movement leading to revolt, but probably all, or nearly all, will accept one further interesting suggestion. Above all other segments of American society, he concludes, the cities were the channels for the transmission to the New World of the ideas and achievements of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. It was here that these ideas “became facts and thereby created history.” It was through the willingness and the ability of the townsmen “to adopt, to transform, and

ultimately to assimilate current and older European elements” that the American people as a whole were able to emerge not only into political independence but also into the modern age. This is indeed the presentation of local history with ample detail and at the same time with broad and significant perspective.

DIRECTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY CRITICISM AND LITERARY SCHOLARSHIP, by James Craig LaDrière. *The Bruce Publishing Co.*

Reviewed by FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY

This volume presents the fourth Gabriel Richard Lecture, delivered in 1953 at Marquette University. Professor LaDrière traces the main lines of English and American criticism from Matthew Arnold to the present, sketches the dominant trends in literary scholarship and in aesthetics, elucidates the current conflict between academic and popular criticism. In the body of the lecture, in the parenthetical allusions, in the many suggestive notes, the author has not failed at least to glance at virtually all the important trends in criticism and scholarship. Few books have attempted to embrace so many ideas in so brief a space. That the author has accomplished so much with the least possible ambiguity in language and without needlessly serpentine sentences is a great tribute to his learning and rhetoric.

Although his primary aim is to trace the movement of criticism from its nineteenth-century tendency toward romantic subjectivity to its modern preference for a more objective study of literature, Professor LaDrière's approach is not purely historical. Indeed his deft criticisms of criticisms, based firmly on an austere scholarship and on sharply realized distinctions between specifically literary values and non-literary values, will provide the discerning reader with the outlines of his own literary theory, and of the relation of that theory to the history of literature, to literary scholarship, and to practical criticism.

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Traditional maxims frequently introduce excellent comment, or even sustained argument, on the issues created by the historical situation.

Many will find it refreshing to hear traditional truths recalled, as in the statement that "the nature of the thing to be studied must decide by what approach and method it is to be studied." The strength of modern critical techniques is compared to the traditional methods of rhetorical and grammatical analysis, its weakness ascribed to the fact that "it has not been adequately generalized by theory; it lacks clear formulation of the principles which ground it and might be the ground of its extension and development in depth."

The author is reasonably hopeful that a strong academic criticism, rooted in expert knowledge and in reasoned evaluation, will ultimately emerge from the welter of critical confusion. He has fortified this hope by contributing this valuable discussion on literary theory and practice. His success here prompts the hope that he will soon develop in greater detail his sense of "the tradition"—his own view of a perennial theory of literature—a theory that pervades the present discussion but is nowhere formally developed.

THE CYCLE OF AMERICAN LITERATURE: An Essay in Historical Criticism, by Robert E. Spiller. *The Macmillan Company.*

Reviewed by STEPHEN J. HASELTON

"There seems to be little doubt in the minds of critics at home and abroad that the United States has produced, during the twentieth century, a distinctive literature, worthy to take its place with the great literatures of other times and peoples." Thus Professor Robert E. Spiller begins his recently published essay in historical criticism, *The Cycle of American Literature*. Yet he finds this achievement "has not been clearly defined or understood, because literary historians have failed to comprehend it as an organic whole." Submitting this

opinion, he undertakes to explain the "second American renaissance" as the product of a long tradition and a unified culture. This is but one objective. In a larger sense he attempts to reveal the underlying unity, which he believes is "firmly defined" in our entire national literature. This task of course is freighted with manifold difficulties: for example, America does not have an independent linguistic tradition, its literature must be necessarily incomplete, and it is partly dependent on older and stronger cultures.

In order to obtain a singleness of view, Mr. Spiller adopts an organic or cyclic theory. From the vantage point of mid-twentieth century, just following a period of great literary achievement, he believes he sees a pattern of development beginning with colonial letters home, these followed by a debate of values, a period of imitation, a climax of original expression, and finally a return to the sources. Within the single organic movement are two secondary cycles: the first of these is the romanticism which grew to maturity in the seaboard area in the 1840's and 50's, and the second is the realism which developed from the conquest of the whole continent. Both, he maintains, contain similar themes and values, such as faith in common men, a mixture of naive idealism and crude materialism, a preoccupation with moral questions, and so on.

Generally speaking, there is little in this view to invite complaint. As a rule, the achievements of authors of either renaissance can in large part be understood if one considers the American ideas and traditions of their times. But one must also remember that several of our most significant artists, for example, James and Eliot, probably owe their greatest debts for instruction and inspiration to foreign traditions. While their work of course has recognizable American attitudes and may therefore be described revealingly in a scheme of a unified national culture, this kind of criticism will not, needless to say, tell all or even perhaps the most important things.

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In addition to seeking a pattern of unity in order to explain America's literary achievements, Mr. Spiller also seeks to appraise other interpretations of them. He tries to set men right who conceive of our literature as fragmentary or unified by only a single social or political theory and who still, by the way, sell their literary histories "by the thousands." While there are doubtless many people who think in one of these ways, surely most contemporary observers believe, as Mr. Spiller himself does, that American literature is essentially of one fabric. Several important studies of this generation, beginning with F. O. Matthiessen's *American Renaissance*, have the revealing of the whole or a part of this unity as their object. It would seem therefore that Mr. Spiller has more company than he realizes.

Hence his book is an excellent reflection of a great deal of critical opinion of the past fifteen years or so. It is entitled to such words as judicious, generally balanced, and often revealing. While his views are not always new, they can and will be recognized as ones accepted only after the most thoughtful consideration. His many years of study and teaching are mirrored in all he says. His volume is a remarkable survey of three hundred and fifty years in less than that number of pages and is one accomplished without real sacrifice or sketchiness. Another outstanding virtue of this book is to be seen in the admirable analyses of certain writers, especially of Poe, Dickinson and Henry Adams, who have often proved the despair of literary historians who desire to find unity in American letters.

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Book Reviews

Our Conservative Tradition

ROBERT G. McCLOSKEY*

NOR so long ago, the term "conservatism" was recognized in many circles as an expression of reproach; the bright young men of the 1930's and early 1940's—or many of them—were as disconcerted to be called "conservatives" as their elder brothers had been to be called "Babbitts." But in the early post-war years the vogue began to change. Stimulated by both political and intellectual developments at home and abroad, a movement for a "new conservatism" began to gather force, and the search for a philosophy of American conservatism was inaugurated by a wide variety of explorers.

Today the wheel has come full circle, and the quest for a conservative rationale is currently acknowledged as respectably modish; even those who oppose the enterprise and disparage its promise are far more courteous toward it than they would have been a decade ago.

But modern conservatism has its difficulties; they have arisen not from the hostility of critics or from an adverse climate of opinion but from within itself. Even under favorable conditions it seems desperately hard for men to agree about what American conservatism is, how it differs from liberalism, and what course of political and social action it should delineate.

As Louis Hartz has shown in "The Liberal Tradition in America," the conservatively inclined American has always been entangled in a paradox: that our national past is so predominantly "liberal" in character. If he espouses conservatism in its European guises, he parts company with the native tradition. If, on the other

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hand, he goes with the American grain (as a conservative surely must), he may emerge with a doctrine that is hard to distinguish from liberalism.

The upshot is that in his confusion he goes coursing off after false and alien prophets or, at best, pastes the conservative label on the old bottle of American liberalism and convinces himself that the wine has a different bouquet. The contemporary movement for a new conservatism has not yet been able to free itself from this classic American dilemma.

Now, to say that the movement to develop a full-blown philosophy of American conservatism has so far failed is not, of course, to say that the movement is unworthy or useless. The conservative impulse is an enduring aspect of the American political personality, and deserves to find expression in a tenable, reasoned doctrine.

Nevertheless, the full unveiling seems far in the future. And while we are waiting, as has been said, a motley crew of self-elected conservatives clamor for our allegiance. In this predicament, we may be justified in setting aside the greater question, which eludes us, frustrates us, even misleads us, and asking a lesser one, which is more nearly within our power. We cannot quite say what American conservatism is, but perhaps we can decide what it is not. Indeed maybe we can push a step beyond that point and identify certain broad characteristics that disqualify men or movements for membership in the ranks of American conservatism.

We need not debate whether those characteristics are pernicious or wholesome. We cannot even insist that we have put a finger on all the qualities of "unconservatism." We shall have some guide lines, however, which will at least enable us to see that a number of people and policies that parade under the banner today are absolutely incompatible with the conservative tradition in America.

My suggestion, then, is to single out a group of men who belong, beyond any serious question, in the authentic American conservative tradition, and to use their qualities as a bench mark against which modern claimants to that title can be measured.

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I should make it clear that I do not propose to define conservatism in terms of the specific positions on public questions taken by this group from the past or the particular doctrines they espoused. This mistake is one we make too frequently, forgetting that times and circumstances change and thereby confusing conservatism with rigor mortis. Rather, my concern is with the tone and quality, the underlying attitudes and assumptions, the spirit of the men we select as standards. What they thought about ephemeral questions of governmental organization or action in their day deserves our respectful consideration, but no more. On the other hand, what they thought about eternal questions—the nature of law, the importance of honor and decency, the idea of civic obligation—and particularly how they thought about such things, this matters very much for it is inseparable from our judgment of their basic quality, and the basic quality of today's figures whom we may want to measure against them.

Whatever may be believed about American leadership in recent times, almost everyone will agree that the Founding Fathers who led and carried through the movement for the United States Constitution were, by and large, men of conservative temper. Some of them fill the bill more aptly than others; a few might even be open to legitimate question on this score. But the prevailing conservative spirit of the group is too plain for much argument, and to establish the point it is only necessary to call a few names from the roll. We can feel the spirit, though we may not be able to define it.

There was, of course, the noblest Roman of them all—George Washington. No one who has learned to know him through his biography and his personal correspondence can miss the balanced, honorably conservative spirit that was his essential quality.

There were James Madison and Alexander Hamilton, whose conservative viewpoints are immortalized in *The Federalist* papers. Though party controversy later drove them far apart, they were close enough in spirit at the time of ratification to unite in their advocacy of a sane, conservative objective and to support it with all the force of their impressive intellects.

Somewhat less familiar, but extremely important, is James Wilson, whose contribution to the Convention was exceeded only by Madison's. Wilson was a man steeped in the conservatism of legal scholarship, a "republican," and staunch opponent of the extreme populism of the day.

Still another figure of substantial significance and of unimpeachable conservatism was John Dickinson, representing Delaware. In the turbulent period preceding the Declaration of Independence, he had courted popular wrath by insisting that peaceful conciliation was possible, while at the same time sturdily contending that the English Parliament had exceeded its just powers. When independence was declared over his opposition, however, he was one of the very few members of the Continental Congress who immediately joined the troops in the field and prepared for battle.

Outside the Constitutional Convention hall, and leading the fight for ratification, were such men as Edmund Pendleton. Like Dickinson, Pendleton had hoped for a peaceable settlement of the quarrel between Great Britain and America, but, like Dickinson, he patriotically supported his country when war came. At the time of the Virginia ratification convention the prestige of this courtly old man was so great that although the majority of his constituents were undoubtedly opposed to his views, they simply would not vote against him, and he went on to become the Convention's presiding officer.

At this same Convention and among the friends of the Constitution was to be found young John Marshall, later "the great Chief Justice" of the United States Supreme Court and a man whose title as conservative certainly brooks no argument.

Finally, to end this brief catalogue, far from the Federal Convention geographically but near it in spirit was John Adams of Massachusetts who was laboring over his masterwork in political science, "A Defence of The Constitutions of Government of the United States of America." If John Adams was not a conservative, then no man ever was.

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The list could be extended, but it is already long enough to serve its purpose and to make my point. These men and their like-minded contemporaries represent the flood tide of the only conservative tradition that has ever really established itself in America. For several reasons their conservatism is the model against which alleged facsimiles must be tried.

Their essence was unquestionably conservative, so long as words still have meaning. Later movements that struck off in other directions, like the "reactionary enlightenment" in the South before the Civil War, died aborning in the face of the conflict between their conservative drive and their liberal inheritance. Other creeds, like the "triumphant democracy" faith of Andrew Carnegie, so altered the meaning of conservatism as to make it almost unrecognizable. The generation of the Founders, in contrast, was able to maintain its conservative temper in a comparatively unadulterated form.

This conservatism was unmistakably American, as a native conservative doctrine must by definition be. The great European conservatives—Edmund Burke, Metternich, de Maistre—can illuminate the path of home-grown conservatism, but they cannot direct it. That function is reserved for Americans themselves.

These men I have described are uniquely qualified both by reputation and by character to provide symbolic leadership for the conservative of today. In the minds of most of us they are unsmirched by the faults of partisanship and greed that sully the fame of so many of their successors. There is a certain unfairness about this, of course. Scholarship can show us that they were not archangels, and common sense can tell us that virtue did not depart America in 1789. And yet in an important sense they deserve the acclaim popular opinion has accorded them. They were not perfect, and their failings should be acknowledged and known. But they were in general men of courage and rectitude far beyond the common run, and they are an enduring credit to the nation they served.

In a word then, this group supplies the modern would-be conservative with a prototype that is indispensable to an understanding

of his own aspirations. These men were conservative ; they were American, and they represent the native tradition at its most appealing best. One who seeks a conservative faith for America is free to draw on many sources, but he must at some point turn back to these men to decide if his product is truly American conservatism.

With these observations in mind, we can turn now to ask what American conservatism is not, and to buttress our answers with a little further analysis of these men and their qualities.

In the first place, American conservatism is not fanaticism. It is not a bundle of simplified answers, nor the angry splashing of black and white paint over complex public questions. It is the virtue as well as the handicap of conservatism that the world it defends is real and, being real, intricately imperfect. No one who sees that world in full perspective can believe that its problems will be solved by hanging one particular rogue or adopting one particular political idea. The easy answers and the single-minded fervor of radicalism are therefore alien to the conservative mind.

Consequently, it is not American conservatism to convert politics into the harassment of devils and the scotching of bugaboos. It is not American conservatism to blame the woes of society on some shrewdly chosen scapegoat group, whether bankers, Jews, bureaucrats, or college professors. It is not American conservatism to view America as a nation rent by a life-and-death struggle between the good guys who agree with me and the bad guys who do not, nor to try to turn America into such a nation. It is not, in short, American conservatism to be savagely radical.

No spirit could be more alien to the Founding Fathers than this rampant intemperance. They were conservative in the full, literal sense of the word ; they were essentially moderate and balanced in their political perspectives.

Here words must be chosen carefully, and distinctions should not be ignored. Hamilton was capable of a certain high-toned extremism of statement, and this quality, among others, has led Clinton Rossiter in "Conservatism in America" to banish him from the

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company of true American conservatives. This point is not without merit, yet one wonders if the conservative spectrum can be so abbreviated without fatally impairing its appeal, for a vital political faith cannot be built on an esoteric base.

We must bear in mind that the American conservative tradition is what it is, not what we think it ought to be, and a modern conservative who is ordered to exclude Hamilton from his hall of fame might well feel that the membership rules were too narrow to be meaningful. Moreover Hamilton, whatever his ideal visions may have been, did accommodate himself to the facts of American political life; did curb his extremist tastes to lead the Federalist administration and to write that model of temperate disputation, *The Federalist*; did cool-headedly oppose such hysterical transports as the Alien and Sedition Acts.

As for the rest of our galaxy, there can be little doubt of what we may call the conservatism of their conservatism. The point is not that their convictions were flabby and colorless, but that they were moderated by an awareness of social and political complexity.

Follow the course of Madison through the Federal Convention and observe how, time after time, his measured wisdom brings about the resolution of conflicting extremes. Read Adams' "Defense," in which the concept of "balance" overarches all others. Or listen to these words of Edmund Pendleton about himself:

"When the dispute with Britain began, a redress of grievances, and not a revolution of Government was my wish: in this I was firm, but temperate; and whilst I was endeavoring to raise the spirits of the timid to a general united opposition, by stating to the uninformed the real merits of the dispute, I opposed and endeavored to moderate the violent and fiery, who were plunging us into rash measures, and had the happiness to find a majority of all the public bodies confirming my sentiments; which, I believe, was the cornerstone of our success . . . I had always some enemies; few indeed, and I had the consolation to believe that their enmity was unprovoked, as I was ever unable to guess the cause, unless it was my refusing to go lengths with them, as their partizan." (D. J. Mays, "Edmund Pendleton").

These are the authentic accents of American conservatism and there should be no difficulty in recognizing the discordancy with the tone of some modern would-be heirs. Disrespect for the rule of law, contempt for the niceties of legal procedure, is not American conservatism—even though strict legality may sometimes slow down and make less sure the enforcement of the community's codes.

There is, to be sure, a sort of "antilegal" tradition in American political thought. Tom Paine would certainly fit into it; so perhaps would Jefferson, if we take some of his dicta seriously; so would the radical Populists of the late nineteenth century. No doubt there is something to be said for the argument that, since the settled legal methods may sometime affront common sense, the law should readily yield to "higher considerations." The fact remains that whatever else may be said about this view, it cannot be called American conservatism.

Of course, this is not to imply that the conservative must abstain from disagreeing with judges, or that he cannot urge changes in the law. But it is to insist that he must revere the law even while querying its specific application. Whether one agrees with him or not, there is a continent of difference between, say, C. Dickerman Williams' sober critique of certain interpretations of the Fifth Amendment and the derision for legal process suggested by Senator McCarthy's use of the term "Fifth Amendment Communist." The current belief that "any methods" are acceptable for rooting out Communists, the rigors of the government security system, the southern doctrine of "interposition," or the flagrant defiance of income tax law by Governor Lee of Utah, all do violence to this canon of American conservatism.

The framers and advocates of the Constitution were profoundly legalistic in the whole tenor of their thought. All but Washington had studied law, but this is not the significant fact. The point is that their feeling toward legality was one of deep, almost awed, reverence. The law—or, rather, The Law—stretched back to the immemorial past and into an inscrutable future, maintaining order and continuity

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and justice in human affairs, and they venerated it with something approaching passion. Most men will join in perfunctory eulogies of law, just as they will agree that sin is a bad thing ; but what many of us mean is that law, like virtue, is well enough so long as it does not frustrate our purposes. When these conservative Founders praised the law, they were making no such mental reservation.

In the controversy with England preceding the outbreak of the Revolution, they stubbornly insisted that their cause was not only right but legal, and that the English Parliament was violating established precepts of the British constitutional system. The war of legal words they carried on to defend this point—Dickinson in the "Farmer's Letters," Hamilton in "A Full Vindication," Wilson in "Considerations," to name only a few—was an earnest testimonial to their horror of illegality. They were not even willing to make a revolution except on legal terms.

During the period of the Articles of Confederation, they were shocked by attacks on the rule of law, like Shay's Rebellion, and they wanted above almost everything else to set their mistress back securely on her throne. Whether or not John Adams penned the phrase, "a government of laws, and not of men," in the Massachusetts constitution, it expressed the dearest aspiration of this conservative generation.

Here again, their attitude toward the law is the bench-mark—not their views on specific legislation or procedures of the day. Unless today's conservative matches their respect for the legal structure, he is out of step with American tradition.

The modern conservative who would follow the trail blazed by these men of the past cannot join in the clamor of anti-intellectualism that is one of the sorriest manifestations of the American reactionary mentality.

Needless to say, this does not mean that the "true" American conservative is barred from criticizing the intellectual-scholarly community when it errs, or from insisting that the individual members of that community accept legal and moral responsibility for such

wrongs as they may commit. Professors no more than businessmen can properly claim the immunities of a privileged class. Moreover, all but the most dewy-eyed worshippers of our intellectual oligarchy would concede that its apostles have sometimes been guilty of the sin of pride and the vice of bad judgment.

*But it is one thing to engage in righteous criticism and another to engage in intellectual-baiting. It is one thing to recognize that book learning has limits and still another to deny its worth. The contemporary attack on schools and colleges, on teachers and professors, has been about one part legitimate rebuke and nineteen parts ill-informed and badly concealed hostility toward intellectualism as such. And the most melancholy thing about it is not that a few individuals have been unjustly vilified, but that American civilization as a whole has been wounded. For while it is not true (as the academic fraternity may sometimes appear to think) that the university library and civilization are strictly synonymous, it is true that a civilization without such libraries and the men who write the books they hold would be a weak and shabby thing.

Few American qualities are more deeply rooted than the uneasy malevolence toward intellectualism that has been most clearly exemplified perhaps by such Populists as William Jennings Bryan and the modern scorn-laden epithet "egghead." But this quality has no place in a philosophy of American conservatism that takes its cue from the Framers.

For these men respected learning, and they treasured and used the wisdom that the scholarly tradition offered them. We are likely to be mildly surprised today to be told that a public figure sometimes reads serious books, and if he actually displays a near-expert knowledge of some subject like history, our wonderment is multiplied severalfold. But we must remember these facts :

James Madison was so devoted to scholarship that he greatly imperiled his health through overwork at Princeton University, and it was his learning no less than his good judgment that made him the "Father of the Constitution."

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Hamilton, in spite of his youth and his other preoccupations, was so widely read in historical and political literature that classical and modern citations crowded naturally to his mind even under the heavy pressure of writing *The Federalist* against newspaper deadlines.

James Wilson, one of the great legal scholars of his day, aspired to be and very nearly qualified as the American Blackstone.

Dickinson taught Wilson law and was regarded, with Franklin, as one of the two leading political philosophers of the period.

In his legal judgments, John Marshall was inclined to depend more heavily on his remarkable intellect than on citations, but scholarship takes diverse forms, and no one can read the Chief Justice's opinions without becoming aware that he sits in a great scholar's presence.

As for John Adams, he ranged the temples of learning from ancient Greece to modern France, displaying an erudition that is no less than staggering when we consider that he also found time to be one of the great statesmen of American history.

Only Washington and Pendleton amongst our galaxy could be denied the title of scholars in their own right. Yet even they could hardly be called exceptions; for they were at home in the company of learned men, and they respected the standards of scholarship and drew constantly on its resources.

James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, John Adams, and the rest were realists and they knew better than to think they could draw the plan of American government from the scholarly tradition alone. But the realism they practiced was genuine, not Philistine, and they also knew better than to think that the wisdom of the past had nothing to offer a "practical man."

Whatever American conservatism may be, it is plainly neither a belief in despotism, benevolent or otherwise, nor a belief in unchecked populism and its associated vices. It abhors absolutism, whether of the few or of the many. It views political right and wrong as a matter of judgment, not sheer will. And it is distrustful of those who live by exciting the "passions of the multitude."

In other words, American conservatism is not consistent with the raucous appeal to mass public opinion of a Fulton Lewis, Jr., or of a Gerald L. K. Smith, or with the attempt to organize the "Friends of Senator McCarthy, Inc." into a nation-wide pressure group.

Nor is it consistent, on the other hand, with the attitude of the Administration concerning McCarthy—that is, that public opinion would decide when he had overstepped the bounds of decency and would take the appropriate action. Rather, it relies on the formation of independent political judgments, regardless of prevailing opinion, and the rational and unemotional presentation of those judgments in the councils of government.

These leaders of the nation at its beginnings accepted the principle of popular rule only with important reservations. They subscribed to the central idea of republicanism—that the ultimate basis of government, the foundation on which it rests, is the will of the whole people.

But they did not want government to be directed by a sort of continuous popular plebiscite; they hoped that the system they established would mitigate the excesses of unchecked majority rule. Judicial review was, of course, one of the agencies which they hoped would curb "popular passions," and John Marshall is therefore rightfully thought of as the very symbol of the conservative misgivings about outright democracy. But these misgivings were built into the constitutional system at many other points, and in varying degrees we can find the attitude that inspired them in all of these men.

It is important to recognize this attitude for what it is. A few decades ago, when scholars began rediscovering the fact that the Founding Fathers were not passionate democrats, some of them leaped to the conclusion that the Framers would have vastly preferred a monarchy or an oligarchy to the quasi-democracy they perforce set up. The either-or premise of this analysis was that the Framers had to be all-out autocrats or all-out democrats; they could not be a little of both.

But temptingly easy though it is to resolve the problem this way, it will not do. These men had fought a revolution to vindicate the right of a people to exercise the ultimate responsibility for governing themselves, and being men of honor they could not repudiate that rallying cry as if it had been from the first an expedient pretense. They did think that property should be represented in government. But those who are tempted to believe that a government of wealth alone would profit either them or America should refer to the remarks by John Adams in the "Defense" on the subject of plutocratic rule.

On the other hand, these men had never meant to suggest that rule by the people should be entirely unqualified, that political morality was a matter of counting heads. And what they feared was that a definition of republicanism in the latter terms would destroy the nation by its excesses, would, as Madison said, do "inexpressible injury to the republican character." What they desired, as Madison also said, was to "redeem the honor of the Republican name," which is a very different thing from desiring to scuttle it. Our eighteenth century conservatives were glad enough to have the majority on their side, if they could achieve this without sacrificing their principles; for they recognized the people as a potent and legitimate political force. But they did not, ever, equate the moral with the popular.

Finally, it is not American conservatism to surrender responsibility, whether personal or national. A narrow self-seeking sectionalism or even a narrow nationalism has no place in a truly American conservative philosophy.

It is hardly necessary to argue that any modern right-wing movement which is keyed to the interests of one class or section, or which rejects the international obligations of nationhood, is incompatible with the spirit of American conservatism as these men represent it. One who seeks to turn America against itself, who drives a wedge of hatred between the estates of the realm, who puts local needs above the preservation of nationality—such a man may call

himself, or be called, many things. He cannot, by any reasonable definition, be called an American conservative.

Similarly, a man or a movement that parochially ignores the world at large and our national responsibility to it is at odds with the temper of native conservatism. A conservative can approve or disapprove particular acts and policies of such an institution as the United Nations. He can hardly disavow the commitment to world obligation that is implied by America's membership in it, unless he is willing to repudiate the brand of conservatism symbolized by the Founders.

One must have a jaundiced eye, I think, not to see that these men were governed by an indelible sense of public duty and responsibility. Their concern to practice and preserve civic virtue was so often expressed that we begin to wish they would give occasional evidence of less lofty motivations and justify our suspicion that they were, after all, mortals.

Nor are we altogether disappointed. When John Adams acceded to the urging of his supporters and re-entered public life to become Vice President, we know, if we know John Adams, that vanity as well as a sense of obligation played a part in his decision. But we also know that the sense of obligation was nonetheless powerful and sincere, as it was throughout his life and the lives of his fellows. They believed with all their hearts that the duty to sustain the nation and the principles of eternal justice fell squarely on their shoulders. It was not merely their choice but their responsibility to raise, as Washington said, "a standard to which the wise and honest can repair."

This quality, this urgent sense of responsibility, carried certain significant implications for them. It meant, of course, that they accepted public office. The nation was governed by her best men during this era, and the fact is worth emphasizing. At no time since has this been quite so true. But it meant much more than that. It meant that these men felt deeply obliged to care for the welfare and unity of the whole nation; they were, in their view, stewards of the

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trust. Their patriotism was not simply the sentimental unearned emotion that brings tears to the eye when the flag passes. It included sentiment, all right, but it was bolstered by the hard-headed realization that a house divided against itself cannot stand and that the duty of a responsible leader is to reconcile, rather than aggravate, the differences ; to cultivate all, rather than a part, of the nation. The national well-being, as Washington said, required :

“ . . . the prevalence of that pacific and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies ; to make those mutual concessions, which are requisite to the general prosperity ; and in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.”
(Charles Warren, “ The Making of the Constitution ”).

It was the duty of these men, as they conceived their duty, to secure this pillar “ on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported.”

Still further, this quality—this heavy consciousness of responsibility—led these men to care deeply, not only for the preservation of the Union but for its dignity and influence among all the nations of the world. The Founding Fathers were Americans, and they served their country’s welfare faithfully. But never for a moment did they delude themselves that this country was alone in the world ; never did they forget that in making a revolution in the name of freedom they incurred a responsibility to what Marshall called “ the votaries of liberty throughout the globe.” Their speeches and writings are full of phrases suggesting their great concern for the opinion of the “ candid world,” their fear that America might make, in Washington’s words, “ a contemptible figure on the annals of Mankind.”

In short, this sense of public responsibility that was so paramount an element of their character led them to feel an obligation, not only toward the nation they had created but toward the world in which they hoped that nation might endure.

A great deal more might be said. This article has not presumed to exhaust the list of the Founding Fathers’ qualities, much less to

present a definitive description of American conservative attributes. I have focused mainly on certain aspects of their characters that have an immediate modern bearing—those aspects that may be especially helpful in evaluating contemporary right-wing movements aimed at the conservatively inclined.

•For that purpose it is very important to realize that the authentic American conservative tradition is moderate, legalistic, responsible, republican in a limited sense of that word, and pro- rather than anti-intellectual. But no suggestion is implied that these qualities represent a full summation of native conservatism. The task of presenting such a summation is still to be accomplished, and a worthy task it is. I here only insist that those who undertake it must find the roots of their inspiration mainly in these leaders of the young American Republic, and that the philosophy they propound must encompass the attitudes I have tried to describe.

Yet partial though this list of qualities may be, it adds up to something that is perhaps more important than its individual parts—the American conservative temper. The mood that the lives of these men reflected is not adequately expressed by any itemized account of their convictions. That mood is something we must feel, as when we say of a report about a friend we know well: “That doesn’t sound like him; he’s not that kind of a man.” The tone of these extraordinary men was so unmistakable that I believe even the brief descriptions presented here should provide a sense of its nature.

If one’s ear is attuned to the cadences of Washington and Adams, he will be in no danger of mistaking a demagogue for a statesman or a blatherskite for a philosopher.

The Man Who Abolished Time

MALCOLM COWLEY*

THORNTON Wilder is the most neglected, in one sense, of the United States' major living writers. The sense is purely critical, since his work has not suffered from popular neglect, except during a few of the early depression years of the 1930's. Before that time his second book, "The Bridge of San Luis Rey," had been the most successful novel published in the 1920's by any of the new-serious writers. In 1956 it was his plays that were popular; one of them was having a triumph on Broadway while a newer one was being produced at the Edinburgh Festival and an older one was being revived by amateur groups more often than any other play of the century.

There is possibly not a night in any year when "Our Town" is not being played somewhere in the western world, often in a dozen towns at once, with the audience in each feeling that it was written especially for them. This very literary author has been accepted as a folk author, almost like Robert Frost, and he has received all sorts of semiofficial honors in the United States and abroad. In Germany and Austria he often is praised as the leading American writer of his time; at home he has been given three Pulitzer Prizes and the Gold Medal of the National Institute, awarded once in five years for distinguished work in fiction. Yet for 20 years there have been no serious critical studies of his work.

I do not fully understand the reasons for this neglect. It is not a conspiracy of silence or a sign of hidden rancor; critics do not often hide their rancor. If there were real hostility there would be attacks and counterattacks and these would lead to some understanding of Wilder's position in American letters. Instead there has

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been a sort of oversight for which one can easily find reasons, but not sufficient reasons. It can be explained partly by the enormous popular success of "The Bridge." In the 1920's most critics believed that a novel could be either a best-seller or a work of art but could not be both. After "The Bridge" had led the best-seller lists for a year, its author was tacitly abandoned to the people, along with their other breads and circuses. But that was a long time ago, before he had done his major work.

Today the silence of the critics can be explained partly by the fact that Wilder has no speciality; he is a novelist, a dramatist, and an essayist, distinguished in all these fields. Each of his new books sets out from a different assumption and follows a different path. Compare the elaborate setting of "The Ides of March," described in a series of invented documents, with the mere hint of a setting in "The Bridge," where the story is told against a flat backdrop labeled Peru; then compare them both with "Heaven's My Destination," which starts in a smoking car. The critics have not known how to label him. Yet for all the diversity of his works, each dealing with another place and time—from the Ice Age to the Atomic Age and from the Andes Mountains to the Isles of Greece, passing through Omaha, Nebraska, and Grover's Corners, New Hampshire—they have been animated from the beginning by the same spirit, one that is almost unique in our own time and country. Perhaps, by contrasting Wilder with other writers of his generation, we can find at least an approximate statement of what the spirit is.

Most of the other novelists born at the turn of the century had a geographical starting point, a sort of rock to which their early books were attached like a colony of mussels. One thinks of Hemingway's Michigan woods, of Faulkner's county in Mississippi, of Wolfe's North Carolina mountains, and of Summit Avenue in St. Paul, the unnamed scene of so many stories by Scott Fitzgerald. With this generation a strong sense of place re-entered American writing for almost the first time since Hawthorne and Thoreau. But the place that most of them cherished was the country of their

childhood, where they had felt at home. In their far wanderings they were always thinking back on it or saying goodbye to it, and often they complained, like Wolfe in the title of his last book, that "You Can't Go Home Again."

Wilder too is a great traveler, but he never had this sense of being exiled or expatriated, perhaps because there is no one place that he regarded as home. That may have been a result of the boyhood years he spent in China: they did not teach him the wisdom of the East, but they took him away from his birthplace in Madison, Wisconsin. He was no longer a midwesterner, and he did not become a Californian in spite of his school days there. Today he is a little more of a New Englander, but chiefly he is an American whose home is wherever he opens one of his bound ledgers, uncaps a fountain pen, and begins writing about people anywhere.

The others had a home place, but no longer had a family. That does not mean they had quarreled with their parents; the days of tears and final separations had ended for writers with the First World War. In the 1920's the young men simply went their way, but it was so different from the parents' way, there was such a gulf between generations, that sons could not talk sincerely with their fathers and be understood. They had rejected the standards by which the fathers lived.

There was no such rejection in Wilder's early career. He never belonged to a conspiracy of youth, leagued in a moral rebellion against middle age. He had worshiped in his father's church and had started by following the profession of teaching that his father picked out for him. In a way he represented continuity and tradition, so far as they existed in American society.

The others were new or at least tried to be new; they made experimental forays in all directions. Each of them wanted to write what might have been the first novel since the beginning of time, from a fresh vision of life, in a new language. Some of the minor writers, now forgotten, would have liked to abolish all literature before Joyce or Baudelaire or whoever might be their idol of the

month. I have heard a toast drunk to Caliph Omar for burning the library at Alexandria.

Wilder is devoted to books, the older the better, and he says that his writing life has been "a series of infatuations for admired writers." He likes to acknowledge that most of his plots are borrowed and to specify their sources, as in a note that precedes "The Woman of Andros": "The first part of this novel is based upon the 'Andria,' a comedy of Terence, who in turn based his work upon two Greek plays, now lost to us, by Menander." But he transforms the borrowed material, with a richness of invention that would be rare in any age, and becomes original through trying not to be.

Each of the others had an ideal of art that was allied to symbolism, or to naturalism, or to impressionism, or was a mixture of all three. In any case the ideal was an outgrowth of the romantic movement, and some of the writers tried to make their lives romantic too, most often Byronic or Baudelairean.

Wilder holds to the classical ideal of measure and decorum. Most of his infatuations have been for classical authors, including Sophocles, Catullus, Virgil, Madame de Sévigné, and La Bruyère, as well as the severely classical Noh drama of Japan, though he also has taken lessons from Proust and Joyce. I suspect that his tastes in writing are more Roman than Greek, and more English Augustan than Roman. Yale University in his undergraduate days was a center of eighteenth-century studies, and there has always been something of that century in his habit of mind; possibly he is the one contemporary author who would subscribe to most of the axioms that Pope advanced in his "Essay on Criticism":

"Those RULES of old discover'd,
not devis'd,
Are Nature still, but Nature
methodiz'd.
.
Regard not then if Wit be old or
new,
But blame the false, and value
still the true."

There is a still more fundamental difference between his work and that of his contemporaries. The others write novels about a social group—sometimes a small group, as in “Tender Is the Night,” sometimes a very large one, as in “U.S.A.”—or they write about an individual in revolt against the group, as in “A Farewell to Arms.” The central relationship with which they deal is between the many and the one. Very often—to borrow a pair of terms from David Riesman—their theme is the defeat of an inner-directed hero by an other-directed society. They feel that the society and its standards must be carefully portrayed, and these writers are all, to some extent, novelists of manners. Wilder, on the other hand, is a novelist of morals.

Manners and morals are terms that overlap, sometimes confusingly, but here I am trying to use the two words in senses that are easier to distinguish. Manners would be the standards of conduct that prevail in a group, large or small, and hence they would change from group to group and year to year. Morals would be defined as the standards that determine the relations of individuals with other individuals, one with one—a child with each of its parents; a husband with his wife, a rich man with a poor man (not the rich with the poor)—and also the relations of any man with himself, his destiny, and his God. They are answers found by individuals to the old problems of faith, hope, love or charity, art, duty, submission to one’s fate . . . and hence they are relatively universal; they can be illustrated from the lives of any individuals, in any place, at any time since the beginning of time.

The characters in Wilder’s novels and plays are looking for such answers; his work is not often concerned with the behavior of groups. An outstanding exception might be his play “Our Town,” in which the Stage Manager speaks with the voice of the community. But the community has not much to say about itself and won’t admit to having local color; it might be any town, a fact that helps to explain the success of the play in towns all over the United States and other countries. The events it sets forth are coming of age, falling in love, getting married, and dying; in other words, they are

not truly events, but rather examples of a universal pattern in human lives ; and they are not greatly affected by the special manners of this one community.

Wilder's first novel was "The Cabala," which also starts by dealing with a group ; but very soon the young narrator shifts his attention to its separate members, explaining that he is "the biographer of the individuals and not the historian of the group." The statement applies to the author himself, and in a more positive form : Wilder is not a historian. He had studied archeology at the American Academy in Rome and had learned to look backward and forward through a long vista of years ; that sort of vision is a special quality of all his work. But what he sees at the end of a vista is what the archeologist often sees ; that is, fragments of a finished pattern of life, in many ways similar to our own. It is not what the historian tries to see : a living community in a process of continual and irreversible change.

The other novelists of his generation were all of them historians. Their basic perception was of the changes in their own time, from peace to war, from stability to instability, from a fixed code of behavior to the feeling that "it's all right if you can get away with it." For them the First World War was a true event, in the sense that nothing was the same afterward. All of them were "haunted fatally by the sense of time," as Wolfe said of the autobiographical hero in his second novel, which was called "Of Time and the River." Hemingway's first book was "In Our Time," and he left it to be understood as "... in no other time."

Faulkner saw his time in the American South as one of violent and progressive decay. Dos Passos tried to put 30 years of American life into one big novel. He invented a device called the Newsreel : it consisted of quotations from Chamber of Commerce speeches, newspaper headlines, crime stories, and the lyrics of popular songs, and it was intended to convey the local color of each particular year. Fitzgerald put some of the same material into the body of his stories ; he wrote as if with one eye on the calendar. "The Great Gatsby"

belongs definitely to the year 1923; when the Fitzgeralds were living in Great Neck (Long Island, New York), and "Tender Is the Night" could have ended only in 1930; no other year on the Riviera had the same atmosphere of things going to pieces. Both books are historical novels about his own time, which is portrayed in them with such a long perspective that the books are permanent.

Wilder would never attempt to draw such a picture of his time. He is our great unsocial and antihistorical novelist, the artist of the anachronism. In all his work I can think of only one event that marks an absolute change; it is the birth of Christ, announced on the first and last pages of "The Woman of Andros." Chrysis and Pamphilus, in that novel, are premature Christians, and the author implies that they would have led happier lives if they had been born in the Christian era. He never mentions that other Christian event, the Fall; perhaps it plays no part in his theology. Everything else in his plays and novels—even the collapse of a famous bridge—is merely an example or illustration of man's destiny.

Nothing is unique, he seems to be saying; even the Ice Age will return, as will the Deluge, as will Armageddon. After each disaster man will start over again—helped by his books, if he has saved them—and will struggle upward until he is halted by another, or perhaps by the same disaster repeated in a different form. "Romes existed before Rome," the shade of Virgil says at the end of "The Cabala," "and when Rome will be a waste there will be Romes after her." Wilder does not think of history as an irreversible process or a river in flood; he thinks of it as a series of recurrent patterns, almost like checker-boards set side by side.

At this point I think we are beginning to see a design that unites his work. Wilder has written a dozen books, each strikingly different from all the others in place and time, in mood, and even more in method, yet all the books embody or suggest the same feeling of universal experience and eternal return. Everything that happened might happen anywhere, and will happen again. That principle explains why he is able to adopt different perspectives in different

books, as if he were looking sometimes through one end of a telescope and sometimes through the other. In "The Ides of March" a distant situation is magnified, and Rome in 45 B.C. is described as if it were New York 2,000 years later. In "Our Town" he reverses the telescope and shows us Grover's Corners as if it had been preserved for 2,000 years under a lava bed and then unearthed like Herculaneum.

He has many other fashions of distorting time. There is a one-act play in which he presents a Christmas dinner that lasts for 90 years, with members of the family appearing from a bright door and going out through a dark door, to indicate birth and death. "The Skin of Our Teeth" tells the story of mankind in three acts and four characters: Adam, Eve, Lilith and Cain. In the first act a glacial shield grinds down on Excelsior, New Jersey. In the second act, laid in Atlantic City just before the Deluge, an ark full of animals two by two is launched from the Million Dollar Pier. In the third act the great philosophers are portrayed as hours of the night. One of the characters explains, "Just like the hours and stars go by over our heads at night, in the same way the ideas and thoughts of the great men are in the air around us all the time and they're working on us, even when we don't know it." Spinoza is nine o'clock, Plato is ten, Aristotle is eleven, and Moses is midnight. Three thousand years of human thought are reduced to four hours, which pass in less than two minutes on the stage.

This foreshortening of time, which almost becomes an abolition of time, is an opportunity for the novelist as well as the dramatist. He is permitted to transfer any character from one historical period or pattern to another, so long as the character reappears on a corresponding square of the checkerboard. Thus, in "The Bridge," Madame de Sévigné has a second life in Peru as the Marquesa de Montemayor. In "The Cabala" there is Keats, temporarily resurrected with his genius, his family, and his fatal illness; he dies in 1920, among a group of strange characters who might have been evoked from the Memoirs of the Duc de Saint-Simon, or who again might be classical gods and goddesses in modern dress.

Figures can be moved backward in time as well as forward. Edward Sheldon, the blinded and horribly crippled dramatist who lived for 30 years in retirement, dispensing wisdom to his friends, appears in "The Ides of March" as Lucius Mamilius Turrinus; and one suspects that Cicero, in the same novel, is a preincarnation of Alexander Woollcott. As for the hero of the novel, he is not a historical character, but a model or paradigm of the man of decision, as he might exist in any age. Wilder has called him Julius Caesar, just as Paul Valéry called his man of intellect Leonardo da Vinci, and just as Emerson gave the title of "Plato" to his essay on man as philosopher.

The mention of Emerson reminds us that he was another writer who denied the importance of groups or institutions and refused to think of history as a process. He discussed Plato and Shakespeare not against the background of their times, but as great contemporaries whom he might meet at the next dinner of the Saturday Club In the brilliant series of lectures that he gave at Harvard in 1950-1951 Wilder started with Emerson and the other classical American writers, notably Melville and Whitman. What he tried to deduce from their works was the character of the representative American, but what he actually presented, I suspect, was something of his own character. Here are three of his statements :

"From the point of view of the European an American is nomad in relation to place, disattached in relation to time, lonely in relation to society, and insubmissive to circumstances, destiny, or God."

"Americans could count and enjoyed counting. They lived under a sense of boundlessness. . . . To this day, in American thinking, a crowd of 10,000 is not a homogeneous mass of that number, but is one and one and one . . . up to 10,000."

"Since the American can find no confirmation of identity from the environment in which he lives, since he lives exposed to the awareness of vast distances and innumerable existences, since he derives from a belief in the future the courage that animates him, is he not bent on isolating and 'fixing' a value on every existing thing in its relation to a totality, to the All, to the Everywhere, to the Always?"

These are perceptive statements, but I would question whether they apply to most Americans today, or to many American novelists since World War I. Their primary application is to Emerson and the big and little Emersonians—including Whitman, the biggest of all. In our day they apply to Wilder himself more than to any other living writer. If on one side he descends from Pope and Addison, or at least has something of their attitude towards the art of letters, on the other side he is an heir of the Transcendentalists. His work has more than a little of the moral distinction they tried to achieve and like their work it deals with the relation of one to one, or of anyone to the All, the Everywhere, and the Always. Like theirs, it looks towards the future with confidence, though not with the bland confidence that some of the Emersonians displayed.

“Every human being who has existed can be felt by us as existing now,” Wilder said in another of his Harvard lectures, as if to explain and justify his foreshortening of history. “All time is present for a single time Many problems which seem insoluble will be solved when the world realizes that we are all bound together as the population of the only inhabited star.”



The Place of Thought in American Life

DANIEL J. BOORSTIN*

NO one can study the history of thought in Europe without taking account, at the outset, of two basic facts. First, there is the separation of the thought of the community into two streams: the stream of "high culture"—the thought, art and vocabulary of the aristocrats, priests, and all members of the privileged and ruling classes, and the stream of "popular culture"—the thought, art, customs, lore and folkways of the great mass of the people. The gulf is so deep and the separation so wide between the two in most European countries, and has been for most of their history, that the definition of what is being talked about offers no problem to the historian of European thought. He is talking about either the "thinking class" or the "working class."

It is a truism that in many periods the aristocracy of France felt a closer fellowship with the aristocrats of Germany than with the peasants of their own country. The folk culture of the English people is at least as remote from that of its aristocratic and educated classes as the culture of England is different from that of France or Italy. When, for example, Sir Leslie Stephen wrote his "History of English Thought in the Eighteenth Century," it was perfectly obvious that he was writing about the ideas which filled the heads of that small fraction of the English population who were literate, educated and close to the seats of power.

Second—and this feature is closely connected with the first—the history of European thought (by which is usually meant the thought of the only "thinking" people, that is the aristocratic

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classes) is on the whole reducible to the history of systems and schools of thought. It is the history of "Thomism," "Rationalism," "Transcendentalism," and other terms which to most of the people of those days were as foreign as another language. It is the history of the specialized architecture of philosophies, rather than of the general physiology of thinking. The grander, the more filigreed and intricate a system, supposedly the greater its claim to treatment in the history of thought. Those elegant intellectual chapels built by Thomas Aquinas and Immanuel Kant thus have become the destinations of the historians' pilgrimage. Scholars find them a welcome refuge from the confusion of the market place.

But it is misleading to take these characteristics of European thought as the starting points for an American history. Our society, unlike most other modern nations, has not been marked by the separation into high culture and popular culture; nor has our thinking been dominated by systems and schools. On the contrary, there have been a number of other large and persistent characteristics of the place of thought in American life. There are those which concern the form of American intellectual life, and those which concern the substance of our way of thinking.

Beginning with the form of our intellectual life, we find two important and apparently contradictory characteristics: first, its unity or homogeneity, and second, its diffuseness.

A. *The unity of American culture*

From one point of view the history of culture in the most developed European countries in modern times has been rather uniform. For the growth of their liberal institutions has not removed their basic distinction between aristocratic culture and folk culture. What has happened is either that their aristocratic culture has been watered down piecemeal to make it more accessible and more palatable to the half-educated masses, or that a few places have been made available within the aristocracy for more talented and ambitious members of the lower classes ("the career open to talent"). A typical example of the first of these was the translation of the Greek and

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Latin classics into the vernacular languages, which was one of the major intellectual events of the European Renaissance. An example of the second was the growth of a system of scholarships which brought to Oxford and Cambridge some young men whose wealth and ancestry had not entitled them to that advantage. But the basic fact is that the modern intellectual and cultural life of the European community is still simply a modification and adaptation of the old aristocratic (high) culture to the sporadic demands of members of the rising classes.

How little progress has yet been made is illustrated by the fact that throughout Western Europe (where alone true universities remain), with insignificant exceptions a higher education is still the prerogative of the rich and the well-born ; but the student population in American colleges and universities is currently over 2,000,000. To say the very least, the culture of modern Europe bears the birthmark of its aristocratic origin : it was made by and for the very few, though it may gradually, in some places and to some extent, have become available to a few more.

American culture is basically different from all this. In this, as in so many other ways, here is something new under the sun. With due allowance for the influence of the European doctrine and example, one must not fail to see the vast importance of the peculiar American situation. For ours is a modern culture which skipped the aristocratic phase. While having the literary and vernacular resources of the European Renaissance and the Reformation behind us, we started our culture with some semblance of wholeness and homogeneity. We have been without that deep bifurcation into high and low, which was the starting point of the national cultures of Western Europe.

The student body of Harvard College in the seventeenth century was probably already more representative of the community at large than the universities of many European countries today. As Samuel Eliot Morison points out, in the earliest years of the College almost every Harvard student was the child of parents who actually farmed the soil, in addition to whatever else they did, and "it does seem

that the College was fairly successful, after 1654, in recruiting boys of scholarly ambition from the plain people of New England." Part of the explanation of this phenomenon is found, for Massachusetts Bay at least, in the extraordinarily high proportion of university graduates to the whole population in those earliest years. But this was only one factor which happened to be important in that part of America. The more universal and characteristically American phenomenon was a homogeneity of thought and culture quite alien to the European experience. This was what Governor Thomas Hutchinson described, in the late eighteenth century, as the fact of "the generality of the colony being very near upon a level."

In Europe the progress of liberal and democratic movements has been measured by the extent to which they have broken down the barriers of the old aristocratic culture; anything which made the language and thought of the aristocracy available to more people was considered progressive. But in America the starting point has been the opposite: the unity of our society has been taken for granted. It is, rather, any failure to make culture available to all the people that has required justification.

While European liberals have tried to put the luxury of a classical education within the reach of members of the underprivileged classes, American democrats have attacked the very idea of a classical education because of its aristocratic overtones. Before the end of the eighteenth century, Benjamin Rush opposed the inclusion of Latin and Greek within the standard curriculum of a liberal education for the simple reason that these languages might be difficult for women to learn, and, he urged, nothing should be part of an American education which was not within the reach of all citizens. From the time of Rush and Jefferson to that of John Dewey, our educators have been primarily interested in what Rush called "the mode of education proper in a Republic."

Thus, foreign travel and study in a foreign university, basic to the European aristocratic ideal of culture and congenial to the cosmopolitan and international allegiances of their educated classes,

were urged by the arbiters of European culture, at least from the seventeenth century. But in 1798, Benjamin Rush asked (in words with which Jefferson would have agreed) that Americans be educated at home rather than in a foreign country. Only in the New World could the unique republican principles of American life be properly reinforced in the young, and only so could the equality of men and the unity of American culture be encouraged. "I conceive the education of our youth in this country to be particularly necessary in Pennsylvania," he wrote, "while our citizens are composed of the natives of so many different kingdoms in Europe. Our schools of learning, by producing one general, and uniform system of education, will render the mass of the people more homogeneous, and thereby fit them more easily for uniform and peaceable government."

This desire for uniformity and homogeneity has had, of course, a profound effect on our conception of higher education, particularly in supporting movements to water it down and flatten its flavor to suit everybody's palate. Thus, a profound truth about our culture lurks in Bliss Perry's facetious suggestion that the ideal of American education could most easily be attained by awarding every American citizen the degree of bachelor of arts at birth. There is no denying that we started with the assumption that a society should have a single culture whose highest thoughts should be accessible to most men.

Even our geographic vastness and variety have contributed to this. Because differences of region and climate are so overwhelming, the differences of social classes in the several parts of the country have actually seemed less important. The American who goes to England, France or Italy cannot but note linguistic versatility as a mark of social caste; the upper classes not only speak their national language with an aristocratic accent, they actually speak several languages. In contrast to this, in the United States, of course, accent is a sign not of class but of regional origin. Even the regional dialects have been much less marked here than in other countries of comparable size. English travelers and American lexicographers noted this in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. "It is agreed,"

John Pickering observed in 1816, "that there is greater uniformity of dialect throughout the United States (in consequence of the frequent removals of people from one part of our country to another) than is to be found throughout England." It is partly by losing their cosmopolitan character, by forgetting all languages other than English, that people become homogenized into American culture. In the United States we all try to speak the same language, and only a few know more than one.

Our ideal of equality has carried with it the fact of universal literacy, and in this and other ways has contributed to the ideal of cultural unity. The Protestant tradition, our lack of ancient institutions and the absence of a professional class of articulators—a "learned" or "cultured" class—all these have played their part. Unprecedented technological development, taken together with natural wealth, a high standard of living and a domestic mass-market for all kinds of products, has produced a uniformity of standards of consumption and a homogeneity in the particular articles consumed. In America, brand names (with all they imply of universal familiarity with a single product, of homogeneity of product, and of potentially universal consumption of the same product) are symbols of the unity of our culture. A Ford car and a Bendix washer are owned by the chairman of the board of directors as well as by the night watchman. Finally, our yen for orthodoxy has encouraged people both to wish for and to believe in a unity in our ways of thinking and acting.

B. *The diffuseness of American intellectual life*

A feature complementary to the aristocratic starting point of European culture is the sharpness with which it is focused on one or a few centers. In modern Europe, the intellectual capital is almost as universal a phenomenon as the aristocracy. Almost every country has had its Paris, its mecca of culture, where one could sit and be at the center of things. One of Europe's main appeals to the American intellectual who has had even a taste of it is the ease with which the focus of intellectual influence and power can be discovered. The

young American who goes to Oxford or Cambridge has the comfortable feeling of knowing—or being in a position to get to know—everybody who is anybody in English culture. The other day I talked with a young American student who had just returned from a couple of years in one of the English universities. Having been only another student in America, required to show what he could do in order to acquire a status, he had found himself suddenly offered a position of status and privilege simply because he was a student at Cambridge, England. "It's awfully comfortable," he said, "to be one of the ruling class." After such an experience, the young American cannot but feel a loss of privilege as well as a loss of bearings when, on return to the United States, he discovers that there is no such center.

Looking at our history as a whole, one sees a diffuseness and a shifting of intellectual life quite alien to the modes of culture in the great nations of Europe. True, different cities have had their days of glory: Boston, Philadelphia, Williamsburg, New York, Chicago and others. But none has had much more than a day. Our cultural center has been nowhere because it has been everywhere. We are almost alone among nations in having found it necessary and possible to create, ad hoc, a special city to serve as the national political capital; that city has never been our cultural capital. From time to time we have had something like an elite, a group which took to itself the privileges—and claimed the immunities—of the intellectual ruling classes of Europe. The most recent and most striking (and the most difficult for our intellectuals to forget) was the New Deal, when American intellectuals had a taste of that sense of power and of sitting at the center which has been familiar to those of Europe. But as Bernard De Voto has described under the useful title of "The Literary Fallacy," American history and American culture, even more than those of other countries, are imperfectly and partially estimated if literature is confused with life, if our society is judged by its literary product. For many reasons, then, American intellectual history can be neither the history of our intellectuals nor the story of our philosophies.

Turning from the form of American intellectual life to the substance of our way of thinking, we find a number of equally striking characteristics. They describe the peculiar vitality and formlessness of our culture. The more rigid and dead the thought of a people, the more easily it is described and reduced to the systems which delight and comfort the academic mind. The more alive a culture and its ways of thought, the more elusive it is and the harder to capture it in systems and categories. The following characteristics are actually ways of describing the elusiveness of American culture.

A. *Interest in institutions rather than ideologies, in process rather than product*

Our most important and most representative thinkers have been more interested in institutions than in ideologies. For an ideology is something fixed and rigid: it is a posture of the truth which some men see in one age and which they seek to get other men to accept as the whole truth. But institutions live and grow and change. They have a life of their own as a philosophy cannot; and our major accomplishments have been in the realm of institutions rather than of thought.

At least since the eighteenth century, observers of our society have noted equality as a characteristic of American life. But it is the fact rather than the theory of equality which has flourished here. If European countries have been strong in theories of equality, as in other political theories, they have been feeble in developing equalitarian institutions. In the United States, on the contrary, where we have had unprecedented success in developing the institution of social equality, we have never been able to produce a pretty or an important theory about it. This is but an example, if one of the more spectacular, of how our talent for improving life has excelled our capacity for perfecting thought.

We have shown very little interest in producing things which would endure: monuments have not been in our line. We have been more concerned with whether an idea or a thing actually serves its purpose than whether it will continue to serve that purpose for a day or a century. We have been anxious not to freeze the

categories of thought, for we are ready to believe that old purposes and old needs will be supplanted by new. In exhibiting his plant, an Italian businessman will show with pride the original workshop where his great-great-grandfather started and which is still in use; an American businessman points out with pride that not a brick of his original plant remains, that the old has been thoroughly replaced by superior modern materials.

Our lack of interest in systems of thought, in ideologies and philosophies, is but a particular illustration of our general lack of interest in perfecting the product. This goes with our special interest in improving the process. We have been more interested in how and whether things work than in how beautiful they can be in themselves. Our architecture has been concerned less with houses than with housing; our engineers, less with producing sturdy automobiles than with developing satisfactory transportation. We have been interested less in good food than in satisfactory diet. We have been worried less over the content of an education, the meaning of truth, knowledge and culture, than over understanding and improving the learning process. Our dramatic artists have been less anxious to produce rounded and enduring works of dramatic art than to provide moments and experiences of entertainment and amusement. The "movies"—from this point of view appropriately and significantly named—is the most characteristic of American art forms. It is an artistic object which from its very nature can never be grasped as a whole; the form is elusiveness itself. It cannot be held in the hand and examined for its perfection, like a play of Shakespeare or an oil painting. It can only be experienced; and its "meaning" is the accumulated sensation of many separate moments.

About a century ago, Sir Henry Maine made his famous suggestion that "the movement of the progressive societies has hitherto been a movement from Status to Contract." There is a great deal of truth in his observation, even when applied to American as contrasted with European society. But a more general principle, of which Maine's maxim is in this case but a corollary, is that the transit of civilization from Europe to America has been a movement from

product to process, from art to institutions, from an interest in things to an interest in ways. The great wealth of America has actually had much to do with this. The abundance of our material resources has encouraged a wholesome unconcern for material things in themselves. We have been able to afford to experiment with the ways of doing a job without worrying about preserving any of the particular physical devices perfected for the purpose. If they no longer do, we throw them away and try others. Thus, our domestic architecture, unlike that of Europe, is not the production of inheritable estates, but the perfection of housing; our automobiles are not heirlooms (as they have become in England or in Italy), but transportation; our dress manufacturers, instead of producing garments which are beautiful and durable, aim to offer the wearer the sensation of being modish for a season.

Never has a people been more wasteful of the things of the earth, and never has that waste expressed greater contempt for the things of this world. America and Asia, as W. H. Auden observes, have in common the fact that they are built on waste: Asia on the waste of human life, America on the waste of material wealth. While scarcity has tempted people in Europe to treat physical means as if they were ends, to give them the reverence and the loving care which the objects of this world may not deserve, the people of the United States have tended to treat all means as expendable and have become preoccupied with getting the job done.

In the secondhand-automobile market in Turin, Italy, when I went to sell a car which I had used for a year, the dealers felt its pulse, listened to its cough, and pityingly, almost tenderly, remarked that it was stanca—"tired." When in Chicago I took my used car to such a market, the dealer looked hastily at his handbook, rather than the car, told me what a machine of that vintage was worth, and turned quickly to persuade me of the superior operating advantages of a new model. The printed word, in the form in which it reaches most people here, aims less to be a rounded literary product than a means of entertainment, of topical and relevant instruction, of information on the qualities and prices of all the other available means of living.

THE PLACE OF THOUGHT IN AMERICAN LIFE

In this sense—contrary to current clichés about us—our willingness to waste things has expressed our unconcern for the things of life and our greater interest in the ways of life. Our distinctive interest in process has been expressed in myriad aspects of American culture which have enabled us to see through the object to the objective; to view art not as the perfection of artistic objects, but as a kind of experience; to see religiosity expressed not in the construction of religious monuments and churches, but in a “religious experience” for which the church building is only a more or less effective instrument.

In the realm of material things, all this has been encouraged basically by our great material wealth with all it has meant in the way of an indefinitely expandable market and a continuing demand for better ways of doing all sorts of things. The distinction here is crucial. We must not consider the growing demand for air conditioners in middle-class homes as just a simple expression of materialism and greed for more things of this world. It is more precise to recognize this as but another illustration of our passionate preference for the experience of being cool in summer and for being comfortable in many other ways.

In the realm of ideas, this frame of mind has carried a distinctive lack of interest in the form of thought, a cavalier indifference to whether our thought is consistent and systematic. We are immensely interested in ideas when they wear work clothes, when they are embodied in institutions. Even then we are less interested in how they look than in how they work. We are less interested in how they sound in the salon or from the lecture platform than in how they function in the market place.

B. *The success criterion*

The intellectual landscape of contemporary Europe is haunted by the ghosts of lost causes. There is hardly a movement in the checkered history of a European nation which does not have its active partisans today. A catalogue of living philosophies in Italy now is an index to Italian history. In those more metaphysically

mindful countries, which have possessed dominant intellectual classes, political parties are ideological. Philosophers classify themselves as disciples of dead centuries. And all intellectual life becomes a museum of past ideologies. Where ways of thought are judged by their intellectual consistency and by their aesthetic appeal, by their appeal to a distinctively intellectual ruling class rather than by their ability to become embodied in institutions, the intellectual life of the community becomes one with the speculations of its visionaries and the vagaries of its metaphysicians. And this is true in most of the countries of Europe.

But in the United States, almost from the beginning, our ideas have been tested by their ability to become embodied in institutions. Puritanism was to prove itself in Zion; Quakerism in a City of Brotherly Love. Where success is a test of truth, men lose interest in lost causes. They cannot be excited by ideas or philosophic systems (however symmetrical or well constructed or well argued) which do not still give promise of being put into practice. The feasibility of a philosophy becomes one with its validity. The intellectual vision of the community becomes confined by the limits of the practical. This may bound the speculative life, but it has its advantages.

Defeat and oblivion become a single fate. Somehow, systems of thought seem to lose their immortality; if only once proved unworkable, they die. Thus, intellectual life in the United States at any moment is both more and less cumulative than elsewhere. For our history is a process of elimination which has disposed of irrelevant ideas; and the living ideas at any particular time are all those remaining ideas with some reasonable prospect of adoption. If our intellectual life is a less rich museum for philosophers, it may be richer tool house for cultivating our garden.

C. *The importance of context : the implicitness of ideas*

Never before was a culture so much nourished on the belief that values grow from the context, that the appropriate way of thinking grows out of the particular style of living. "We ever held it certain," declared Cabeza de Vaca in 1535, "that going toward the

sunset we would find what we desired." The Puritans, too, believed that Westward the course of the Gospel would have its way : following Jesus' prophecy in Matthew 24 : 27, they were confident that, as the light of the Gospel had formerly shone out of the East, so now it would shine out of the West. Through the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries—from Crèvecoeur's notion that America had produced a new man, through Jefferson's belief in the wealth, promise and magnificence of the continent, and Turner's faith in a frontier-born culture and frontier-nourished institutions—runs the refrain that American values spring from the circumstances of the New World, that these are the secret of the "American Way of Life." This has been both an example of our special way of dealing with ideas and an encouragement to it. For lack of a better word, we may call this a leaning toward implicitness, a tendency to leave ideas embodied in experience and a belief that the truth somehow arises out of the experience.

This carries with it a preference for the relevance of ideas as against their form and a surprising unconcern for the separability of ideas. We have seldom believed that the validity of an idea was tested by its capacity for being expressed in words. The beliefs that values come out of the context that truth is part of the matrix of experience (and hardly separable from it) become themselves part of the way of American thinking—hence, the formlessness of American thought, its lack of treatises, schools and systems.

D. *The nirvana of success : self-annihilation through mastery and adaptation*

All this has produced a quaint inversion of the Buddhist approach to life, or rather something like an American notion of Nirvana. For the Buddhist, bliss is attained by the loss of personal identity, by being absorbed into the universal oneness and nothingness. His self-annihilation is arrived at by transcending the physical environment, by rising above wind and rain, hunger, life and death. The characteristic notion of bliss developed on the American continent involves a comparable process of absorption and loss of identity. But here that oneness is attained by a complete adaptation to the environment

which involves seizing the opportunities which it offers, by "fitting in." The objective is an almost mystic and naively sensed accord with everything about one. The oblivion of Nirvana and the oblivion of success have much in common. In both, the individual transcends his own personality to become part of what surrounds him. The desire to master the forces of nature, to wrest from the environment all the wealth it holds, to find all possible uses of every material—this has carried with it a willingness to adapt to the social situation, to make the social norm not the fulfillment of some preconceived, philosophy-sharpened ideal, but the fulfillment of the possibilities in the situation, the attainment of compromise. So, for the American, it is not Nirvana, but Rotariana.

E. *Continuity and conservatism of ways of thought*

Perhaps never before has there been a society with such remarkable continuity in its ways of thought even from the time of its first settlement. The success criterion, the implicitness, the concern for institutions—all these have prevented abrupt breaks in the direction of our thought. For the chain of circumstances is not casually broken as the chain of ideas can be. A philosopher in his study can think up a new and sometimes attractive frame of ideas; he can propose an anarchy, a revolution or a new beginning; he is free as the air. But circumstances hold within them certain limits; every event somehow grows out of its predecessors. And American empiricism has tied our thinking to the slow, organic growth of institutions. By rejecting ideologies, we reject the sharp angles, the sudden turns, the steep up-and-down grades, which mark political life in many parts of the world, in favor of the slow curves, the imperceptible slopes of institutional life. If ever the circumstances of a culture have suited a people to think "institutionally," American history has done so. For us, fortunately, it is impossible to distinguish the history of our thought from the history of our institutions.

Medical Triumphs Just Ahead

WILLIAM L. LAURENCE*

FROM where I sit I can see the coming within the next decade of a great golden era in medicine, the greatest so far in mankind's history. I see progress in many fields of science—physics, chemistry and the so-called life sciences—developing at such a rapid, ever-increasing pace that I expect it to culminate within the near future into a mammoth break-through of knowledge, a break-through of such magnificent proportions that a way will at last be open for the control of all the terrible diseases that have baffled and plagued mankind through the centuries.

Many of the outstanding leaders in their fields are now hopeful that by 1965, and possibly as early as 1960, the four great scourges of mankind—cancer, the fearful illnesses of the mind, heart and circulatory ailments and virus diseases—will have been brought under control.

Peering over the shoulders of men as they work with their advanced microscopes and highly refined "crucibles" of infinite variety, I have watched the establishment of important beachheads on the frontiers of life's fundamental processes, all gradually converging on the citadel hiding life's basic secrets of health and disease. And I have become fully confident that we are about to see the greatest victory in the history of man's battle against disease, suffering and death.

This victory will be based not on any one discovery, but on a break-through into a knowledge of the underlying causes of the great diseases. So swift has been recent progress toward this

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knowledge that any particular drug or test or research development announced today may be superseded tomorrow. But whatever its form, the ultimate result will spring from this new body of knowledge.

We are making progress toward an understanding of the inexorable process of aging. Better knowledge of this process will lead to the development of weapons, both preventive and curative, that will bring the degenerative diseases such as cancer and cardiovascular ailments under the same control which we now have over the infectious diseases through immunization, sanitation and the antibiotics.

Yesterday's dreams that man will master the diseases which have harried him through history are becoming realities at a breath-taking pace. It is apparent to me that the explosive progress we are making in our knowledge of life's underlying secrets is being accelerated to such an extent that developments previously expected to take 25 to 50 years, if not longer, are now expected to be achieved in no more than 10, and some of them in as little as five years.

Men of science who only a short time back took a dim view about the likelihood of any significant progress in less than half a century against the major degenerative diseases are now confident of important advances in the near future. There is a feeling of victory in the air, and authorities in the field of medical research who are highly qualified to speak—some of them only yesterday were the most pessimistic—are now among the most hopeful that the four great scourges which I have mentioned can be controlled.

I can cite only a few of the most recently voiced of these hopes. Take cancer, for example. A few years ago, one of the leading experts in America stated categorically, in answer to my question, that he didn't expect the cancer problem to be solved in less than 2,000 years. That was his way of saying that he didn't believe a cancer cure could ever be found. Contrast this hopeless outlook with that of Dr. Cornelius P. Rhoads, scientific director of the Memorial Center for Cancer and Allied Diseases, New York City, one of the

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world's greatest cancer institutions. In a statement some weeks ago, he confidently predicted that substantial progress toward cancer control was only a matter of time.

Signs point to the development, by 1960, if not sooner, of a simple diagnostic test that will detect cancer in its early or incipient stages, when it often can be eradicated. A blood test for cancer, similar to the Wassermann test for syphilis, was recently reported by a team of researchers at the laboratories of the Youngstown (Ohio) Hospital Association. Although this test has not been generally evaluated, the researchers stated it was accurate in at least 90 per cent of more than 1,700 cases studied and that it was "practical for mass screening, inexpensive, rapid and easily mastered by medical technologists."

Other cancer fighters report progress in the development of radioactive substances (isotopes) designed to aim their deadly radiations against the sites of cancerous tissues. One of these "atomic guided missiles" is radioactive iodine, which has a specific affinity for cancer of the thyroid gland. Another is radioactive phosphorus, which retards the wild growth of white blood cells in chronic leukemia. Tiny "seeds" of radioactive gold are being used to destroy cancer of the tongue and other such tissues. Other radioactive isotopes are being developed with particular "directional antennae" for other tissues and organs, the ultimate aim being to develop specific chemicals having an affinity for specific organs and tissues, which would serve as the "guides" of radioactive substances attached to them.

Progress is also being made in the development of specific, highly selective anticancer chemicals, similar to the lawn chemicals that select only weeds for destruction. The chemicals with "built-in anti-cancer antennae" include the group known as "antimetabolites," which deprive the cancer of vital food substances it needs in greater amounts than do normal cells.

One of the truly big stories of our generation—the greatest since the discovery of insulin therapy in schizophrenia by Dr. Manfred

Sakel more than 20 years ago—is the dramatic success of certain drugs, such as reserpine, a derivative of the snake-root plant (*Rauwolfia*), and chlorpromazine, in the alleviation of a variety of mental illnesses, from alcoholism to schizophrenia. These drugs, known as tranquilizers, do not provide a cure, but they make accessible to therapy very disturbed mental patients who previously could not be given various forms of treatment. And there has been noteworthy progress in the biochemical approach which has given psychiatry a real key to the relationships between the mind and chemical functioning of the body. And this offers the definite hope that at last we may find a chemical approach to the treatment and prevention of many types of mental disease.

By a strange coincidence, which may lead to the discovery of a common cause among serious diseases of the mind and body, the very same tranquilizing drugs that are yielding such dramatic results in the improvement of symptoms of mental disease are bringing about equally dramatic results in the alleviation of high blood pressure. Thousands of sufferers from this major disease of civilization have been given a new lease on life by the use of these tranquilizers.

High blood pressure is one of the cardiovascular ailments which also include heart disease, the greatest killer of modern man. Only a few weeks ago, Dr. Paul Dudley White, President Eisenhower's chief heart specialist, predicted that within five years physicians would be able to point to a "likely candidate" for a heart attack and give him "positive advice" on how to prevent it.

Indeed, the victory over heart disease will be definitely speeded up by President Eisenhower's attack, which has mobilized wide public support for the fight against this enemy of mankind just as the late President Roosevelt's personal battle against polio provided the major impetus for the successful fight on the part of the whole American people against the disease, which culminated in the development of the Salk antipolio vaccine.

Research on coronary heart disease and hardening of the arteries is being done by a team of investigators at the University of California

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headed by Dr. John W. Gofman. Their studies have revealed, they report, that the blood serum of victims of arterio-sclerosis (hardening of the arteries) contains certain large fatty molecules (lipoproteins) in much greater proportions than the blood serum of normal individuals, particularly of young persons. These large fatty molecules, they have further observed, are always associated with the most deadly type of arterio-sclerosis, known as atherosclerosis, characterized by the accumulation of fatty substances in the lining of the arteries, which is responsible for more than 95 per cent of all coronary heart disease.

If Dr. Gofman's studies prove valid, we may have the promise of an effective diagnostic test to reveal coronary heart disease years before a heart attack strikes, simply by detecting the first signs of abnormal increase in these telltale fatty molecules.

Progress is also being made in the development of methods for the prevention as well as treatment of hardening of the arteries and coronary heart disease. A team of workers at the Harvard Medical School has recently reported a method for removing from the blood stream a fatty substance named cholesterol, believed by many to be a major culprit in the development of these afflictions.

The same air of optimism pervades the field of the remaining unconquered virus diseases, of which the common cold is the most prevalent and disabling. At a recent panel of specialists on the common cold, in New York City, attended by the world's leading experts on the subject, it was predicted that victory over the common cold would come within five years. This was the consensus of the panel, which included such authorities as Professor John H. Dingle of Western Reserve University, one of the world's foremost experts on acute respiratory diseases, and Professor John F. Enders of the Harvard Medical School, co-winner of the 1954 Nobel Prize in Medicine for the discovery of the technique for growing viruses in test tubes, which made possible the Salk antipolio vaccine.

Professor Dingle listed several possibilities in support of his prediction: the immunization of all the population with a multiple

vaccine ; means for breaking the spread of the infective agents ; and chemicals to cure the cold after it had set in. He believes the last to be the most likely. On the other hand, recent developments also justify the conclusion that the approaching conquest of the common cold will come through a combination of a vaccine and chemicals, with a multiple vaccine used against the more virulent types of responsible viruses and a chemical agent against the milder types.

As many as 13 "grippe" viruses, that cause fever, sore throats and runny eyes, have been isolated by Dr. Robert J. Huebner and his associates at the National Microbiological Institute of the United States Public Health Service at Bethesda, Maryland. Experimental vaccines against three of the most serious viruses have been developed and are under study, while similar vaccines against the others are on the way.

Meantime, scientists at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research, New York City, are making significant progress in the development of specific chemicals against viruses, while other groups are perfecting more potent antibiotics against bacteria that add to the misery of the common cold.

* * *

All these significant advances provide a solid foundation for the air of optimism among the men who are qualified to speak. But by far the most important reason for the optimism rests on an even more solid foundation. This is the breath-taking progress being made in the explorations on the very frontiers of life, hitherto a no man's land, far beyond the reach of man's most skilful probings. It is these explorations on life's frontiers, made possible at last by the development of new techniques and weapons, including the radioactive isotopes, that have made possible the illumination of some of life's darkest corners, that are paving the way to that mammoth break-through of knowledge within the next 10, possibly five, years which I mentioned earlier. It is this unprecedented break-through that, in my opinion, holds out the greatest promise so far for the conquest of men's major ills and the addition of many productive, happy years to his life span.

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All the recent triumphs of modern science, including the harnessing of atomic energy, Dr. Maurice L. Tainter said recently, "shrink to insignificance beside a greater spectacle: the explosive development of our present Golden Age of Medicine."

"Medicine today," said Dr. Tainter, a world leader in pharmacology, "is accomplishing greater miracles than, for example, atomic energy developments. It is because, in this Golden Age of Medicine, we have consciously evolved a technique and a scientific philosophy that finally enables us to wrestle with death itself, and on increasingly even terms."

It took only one major break-through to open the way to the conquest of the infectious diseases. This break-through was the discovery by Louis Pasteur, less than a century ago, of the bacterial origin of infectious diseases. This greatest single discovery so far in medical history has opened the way to the control and eradication of most of the major plagues of mankind caused by microbes, with the assurance that the day of the conquest of the remaining ones is not far away.

Similarly all the major triumphs of modern surgery are the direct result of the discovery of ether anesthesia a little more than 100 years ago. But even that development, great as it was, would have been largely of no avail were it not for the discovery of the bacterial origin of infections, which led directly to the great era of antiseptic, infection-proof surgery.

Now our newly evolved techniques and scientific philosophy have brought us to the threshold of another era, even greater in its promise than the one opened up by Pasteur. For these techniques and scientific philosophy make it practically certain that we are on the verge of another major discovery that, in my opinion, will provide us with a single key to all the degenerative diseases.

In fact, we already know where the major new break-through is to come, and vast armies of scientific workers are getting ready with their highly refined equipment and subtle devices to make the final assault on the wall behind which nature has hidden some of

her major secrets of life. For it is by now well established that it is the process controlling the rate of aging that lies behind the deteriorative diseases that come after an individual has passed his prime. Hence, a major victory in the battle against these diseases may come by breaking through the massive wall of our ignorance about the aging process and the underlying causes that make some of us grow older at a faster pace, mentally and physically, than those who retain their youthful vitality for decades longer.

Just as the discovery of the general cause of the infectious diseases led to their control and prevention, so I fully expect that the discovery of the basic mechanisms controlling the rate of aging will similarly lead to the development of effective breaks on the downhill course of our lives, so that men and women will remain close to their prime for many more years, measured in decades. Thus, by slowing down the rate of aging we will, at the same time, also prevent the degenerative diseases now recognized as being largely manifestations of the aging process, or rather of an accelerated rate of aging.

Pasteur's major discovery was made possible by the availability of the microscope, which enabled him to observe the bacteria associated with infection. The coming major break-through into the secrets of age has been made possible by the advent of another weapon, described as "the greatest invention since the microscope"—the radioactive isotopes, miracle products of the atomic oven. These radioactive varieties of the common elements have given man a great variety of wide "windows" through which to watch life in action as it performs its infinity of functions. For these radioactive substances can be introduced into the living bodies of animals, and their course carefully followed by their radiations as they travel through the great variety of mazes in life's dark labyrinth. Thus, for the first time, man has the means for exploring life's hitherto forbidden interior.

With the aid of this all-seeing "cosmic microscope," as it were, by the light emanating from the cores of atoms, inner shrine of the universe, we are beginning to get the first glimpses of the all-important mechanisms controlling the rate of aging.

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In fact, we are already on the track of one of the basic reasons, if not the basic reason, why some of us are old at fifty or thereabouts, whereas others are still mentally and physically alert in their eighties and even nineties. It has been known for some time that there are two general types of immunity. One is the acquired, or artificial type, which comes as the result of exposure to a specific germ, in which case the individual acquires an immunity against the specific germ for varying periods of time, sometimes for life.

But there are other types of immunity that have nothing to do with exposure to any specific germ or disease. They are known collectively as innate immunity, which, rather than being specific, endows the individual possessing it with a high degree of resistance against infections caused by bacteria as well as viruses in general, and also gives a high degree of protection against noninfectious diseases. As yet, we know very little about these all-important types of natural immunity, which appear to be part of an individual's constitutional make-up, transmitted by heredity.

Years of research at the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Columbia University, by Professor Henry S. Simms on "aging as a physiological process" led to an interesting suggestion about the role played by natural, innate resistance in determining an individual's longevity. "Ninety per cent of the deaths in the United States each year," Professor Simms's studies revealed, "result principally from the progressive loss of resistance to disease with advancing age." The death rate in humans, he found, "is at a minimum at the age of ten, when only one child in 1,200 dies." These figures brought to light a startling fact. If the death rate remained at this ten-year-old level throughout the whole life span, Professor Simms calculated, "our life expectancy would be over 800 years."

Professor Simms's studies provided one of the first real clues as to the reason why some individuals grow older at a faster rate than others. The rate of "ticking" of the built-in "biological clock," the studies showed, depends on the rate of the gradual loss of the natural, innate resistance. The long-lived individual would thus be

one endowed by heredity with "built-in brakes" to check the gradual loss of this general resistance. The more effective the brakes, the slower would be the rate of "ticking" of the "biological clock."

It was the recognition of the role of heredity in an individual's life span that led Oliver Wendell Holmes more than a century ago to present a prescription for longevity. His advice to those who wanted to live long was "to advertise for a couple of parents, both belonging to long-lived families, some years before birth."

Until recently Holmes's longevity formula was still as valid as it was more than a hundred years ago. For while we had learned a great deal about acquired specific immunity and how to induce it artificially by means of vaccines against specific germs, we knew practically nothing about natural immunity.

But in August, 1954, a team of investigators at Western Reserve University (Cleveland), headed by Professor Louis Pillemer, announced a dramatic discovery—the isolation of a new protein substance from the serum of animal and man that appears to be one of the key substances in life's all-important general immunity system. The new serum substance, which they have named properdin (from the Latin word *perdire*, to destroy) may turn out to be one of the most important in the catalogue of life, since preliminary studies indicate it may play a significant role in maintaining the body's natural resistance against infectious as well as noninfectious diseases. This discovery thus promises to open the way at last to the control of natural and nonspecific immunity—to increase it to the maximum when it is found to be below par, and also to provide brakes to slow down the rate of its gradual loss to the minimum possible.

Along with the discovery of properdin, we are now watching the development of ever more-refined techniques that are bringing us ever nearer to a veritable chemical "Fountain of Youth," hidden by nature ever since life began. With the light of the electron in the atom's outer shell, harnessed in the electron microscope which magnifies objects 100,000 times, and the light of the atom's inner core, we are now unraveling the structure of the proteins, the primary

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molecules of life, and are watching life on the elemental molecular level. We are gaining important insights into the chemistry of heredity and the structure of the materials through which heredity is transmitted throughout the realm of life. We are discovering that even in the smallest units of living matter there exists a profound relationship between their architecture and their biological activity, and that even the smallest chemical change may alter the hereditary character of an organism. From the concentrated study of muscle we are beginning to find out how all living things utilize the energy whereby they live. And we are at last beginning to make headway against the formidable blood-brain barrier, which may lead to chemical control and prevention of disorders of the mind and the central nervous system.

This is what Dr. Tainter had in mind when he said "we have consciously evolved a technique and a scientific philosophy that finally enables us to wrestle with death itself, and on increasingly even terms."

While death is an inevitable part of life, and chemical Methuselahs are neither possible nor desirable, all evidence now indicates that the normal human life span could be prolonged in the near future to more than a hundred.

As I go about our great research centers and glance over the shoulders of the dedicated men and women who labor in them, I grow ever more confident that we are getting ever closer to the answer of one of life's greatest riddles—the biochemical processes that control the rate of aging. And when we get the answer to the riddle—and I am confident it will come within a decade at the most—we shall have found a way to fill Oliver Wendell Holmes's prescription for longevity. But instead of having to advertise for long-lived parents "sometime before birth" we shall be able to provide chemical equivalents of long-lived ancestors any time after birth.

Ten years from now we will be 10 or even 20 years younger.

A Record Filled With Sunlight

ALLAN NEVINS*

ROLLING plains covered with dry bunch grass stretch for miles on every side. Far on the northern horizon lifts an enormous square-topped butte, giving individuality to that quarter of the landscape. Westward, faint in the distance but brought into hard relief as the sun sets, are penciled the snowy peaks of an isolated mountain chain; and close inspection shows that near their base the country dips into a narrow valley, with cottonwoods indicating a stream whose waters are fed by these distant summits. It is an uninhabited, untraversed country, bare of track or meaning—a page on which the first hieroglyphs of history are still to be inscribed.

In this solitude suddenly appears a party of thirty men, moving slowly on foot and leading a larger number of animals; some horses with saddlebags, more of them pack mules and pack ponies laden with all kinds of gear from tent to frying pans. At their van walks a lithe, well-proportioned man, clad in deerskin shirt, blue army trousers, and thick-soled moccasins, with a cotton handkerchief bound around his head. His remarkable feature is not his curling black beard, aquiline nose, or high forehead, and not even his piercing eyes, but his air of intense energy.

What was the true character, and what the precise training, of John Charles Frémont as he thus appeared on the western stage? He described himself as an officer of topographical engineers. What was the history of this special corps, and what were its functions? He obviously had various duties in relation to such a landscape as we have described. Was he simply to wander through it, take some

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random notes on hills and watercourses, jot down the state of the weather, and camp and cook buffalo meat whenever he felt tired? If that were so, we might wonder at the fact that his name has been given to so remarkable a list of places—rivers, peaks, counties, streets—in the United States. What relation did he bear to exploring expeditions before him and after him?

The character of John Charles Frémont has been much misapprehended. He has usually been described as of a romantic temperament. But although the romance of his career, with its unending adventure and wild vicissitudes of golden and leaden fortune, can hardly be exaggerated, and although the quality of common-sense, tough-minded judgment sometimes deserted him, he was essentially steady, patient, and industrious.

Particularly as an explorer he was painstaking and persistent. Few men were better inured to drudgery and hardship. He had dash and brilliance, to be sure, but he made his way upward in his profession primarily by close application and sheer toil.

Professional assiduity, unusual self-control, readiness to endure any amount of monotonous hard work, deprivation, and exhaustion—these were traits of Frémont that we should not allow his many adventures, and the picturesqueness of the scenes in which he moved, to obscure. Other qualities, however, some of them virtues and some grave faults, come nearer the core of his personality.

He was a lover of action, a man of intensely kinetic temperament, craving outdoor pursuits as much as did William Clark or Kit Carson; as restless, in fact, as any frontiersman. In boyhood he had snatched pleasure from risks in the waters around Charleston from which most lads would have recoiled. He had ardently turned from professional opportunities—the pulpit, the bar—to the joys of surveying in the forested valleys and mountains of the southern Appalachians.

It is significant that Carson, like that other expert frontiersman Alexis Godey, regarded him with deferential respect. To both he was as efficient a man of action as they could desire—and in addition a scientist. Godey speaks of "his daring energy, his indomitable

perseverance, and his goodness of heart." Carson writes that he shared indescribable hardships with Frémont from 1842 to 1847, "and the credit which he deserves I am incapable to do him justice in writing."

Of all our American explorers, no other had anything like his zest for the work he was doing : a zest compounded of delight in wild scenes, excited hope of new discoveries, and the thrill of peril. He makes us share his pride in his instruments ; a specially fine thermometer, for example, raises bright anticipations of experiments in determining altitudes.

His feeling for landscape, for trees and flowers, and for wild life sometimes blended in one rapturous whole. Thus he describes one unexplored glade in the Rockies with a rich undergrowth of plants and numerous flowers in brilliant bloom, "a place to delight the heart of a botanist" : beavers and mallard ducks in the stream ; small brown squirrels leaping about in the branches ; and air fragrant with pine. "I realize this delightful morning the pleasure of breathing that mountain air which makes a constant theme of the hunter's praise, and which now made us feel as if we had been drinking some exhilarating gas." His record is filled with sunlight. The toil, the discomfort, the danger, never dull his quick, sentient pleasure in the wild, the new, and the beautiful.

Gifted as Frémont was with this dynamic, exuberant temper, it was the more creditable to him that in fields of knowledge connected with this calling he was a model of application. He felt from childhood, as he writes, a love of mathematics. He was a close student of botany. He did enough general reading and enough work in Greek and Latin to form a sound literary style—in later years he even wrote verse. Only a well-read man, on reaching San Francisco Bay, would have given the Golden Gate its name, with the Greek equivalent ; or would have spoken of a narrow Rocky Mountain pass with hot springs as "this Thermopylae of the West" ; or would have written of an old woman of the Snake tribe as "desirous, like Naomi of old, to return to her people."

It was also creditable to Frémont that with his zest in exploration he united the qualities of a sound disciplinarian. While this fact must be read between the lines of his narrative, it is perfectly plain. His expeditions moved by fixed hours and rules. To be up at day-break, the animals grazing (if possible) while the men snatched a quick breakfast ; to march all day ; to camp an hour before sunset, giving the animals that much more time to pasture ; to put the packs under rubber cloths or other shelter ; to stack the rifles, muzzles tied together, a knife laid on the rope to cut it if an alarm occurred ; to place a three-man guard, relieved every two hours—these were the primary regulations.

Meticulous carefulness and industry were part of his discipline, for he himself bore the heaviest responsibilities. As chief scientific observer he was often awake at midnight making astronomical calculations, his feet freezing in slush and snow, his face cut by a parching wind, and awake again while the morning stars still shone brilliantly. He had to write the journal no matter how cold, tired, or hungry he might be. He was the chief medical officer. He was responsible for every piece of government equipment, every animal, every human life.

His attitude toward Indians was exceptionally considerate. He showed always a peaceable mien, and on one occasion forbade any reprisal even upon irresponsible young braves who had talked of killing white emigrants. Kit Carson was always quick enough to kill, and we repeatedly read of white trappers who slew Indians as a form of sport. Frémont, however, was struck with pity by the wretched lot of some tribes.

Another trait of character which partly accounts for the gusto he brought to exploration was intellectual curiosity. His wide range of interests gives his reports no small part of their value. Sometimes he deals with amusing trivia, like the shades of meaning attached to the words "butte," "knob," and "cerro." Sometimes his disquisitions have a political interest, as in the paragraph for May 23, 1844, on the importance of keeping the Columbia River under the American flag.

Finally, and in some ways most importantly, Frémont developed an imaginative largeness of outlook which lifted him quite above the level of a plodding though efficient army officer like Zebulon M. Pike. Possessing an eye for grand geographical features, he never let the trees obscure the forest. Without this trait, he would not have been the first to name and describe the Great Basin. It was developed rather than bred in him, however, and to understand it we must turn to a fuller view of his training.

From the strictly-managed College of Charleston, which he left in 1831 without quite completing his work, but where he was well grounded in mathematics and the classics, he went on a naval cruise to South America, teaching midshipmen. Then he helped survey a railroad route in the Carolina and Tennessee mountains; immediately thereafter he accompanied his superior in the United States Topographical Corps (to which the influential Joel R. Poinsett got him appointed) in a military reconnaissance of the Cherokee country in Georgia. This was good practice. He learned much of surveying, mapping, and woodcraft. But his tuition really began when in 1838 he was made assistant to a distinguished scientist, J. N. Nicollet, who had been chosen by the War Department to execute a scientific examination of the wide plateau between the upper Mississippi and the upper Missouri.

This brought Frémont under the influence of the vital French tradition in topographical studies. Europe had no man who knew more than Nicollet about making mathematics, astronomy, and meteorology useful to mariner, explorer, and civil engineer. When Nicollet suddenly determined to emigrate to the United States in 1832, he was received by scientific circles as well as French families as a man of high distinction. In 1836 the officers at Fort Snelling were delighted to assist him in traveling to the upper Mississippi and in studying the Chippewa; and the next year Poinsett, now secretary of war, invited him to Washington. Frémont was fortunate to be his chief assistant.

Nicollet was the first explorer to make careful use of the barometer in calculating interior altitudes in America. A user of the

barometer, he said, must know every part of the instrument and be ready to repair it, however inadequate his facilities, if necessary. (Frémont's ingenious repair of a broken barometer by scraping thin a buffalo horn and bending it in tubular form to replace the glass exemplifies Nicollet's point.) He must, Nicollet said, be familiar with all the meteorological laws relating to these instruments, so that when variations occur he will know which are periodic, which accidental. He must exercise sleepless care of his treasures.

But compared with some other tasks, barometrical observations were easy. The scientific explorer had to make exact observations on geology, botany, ornithology, and zoology. He had to note the weather, with precise temperatures. He had to collect specimens—the right specimens. He had to make contributions to ethnology by notes on Indian life. If he were worth his literary salt (and few were), he had to record scenes and incidents that would commend his narrative to the general reader. In short, he had to be alert to everything all the time.

On all this Nicollet, supplementing others, gave quickly absorbed lessons to the ardent young Frémont. Never did scientist have a more eager learner.

Out of the partnership of Nicollet and Frémont grew the map that the former bound with his *Report*; "one of the greatest contributions ever made to American geography," writes Lieutenant G. K. Warren in his history of western exploration before 1855.

It was a marvelous training for a scientific explorer, at once precise and broad; far better than that which West Point at this time gave young officers of the Topographical Corps. Frémont was as well equipped as any predecessor and better than most, and should in some respects have improved upon their work. What comparisons can we draw between his achievements and those of others?

Lewis and Clark are in a sense *hors concours*, defying rivalry. They had the advantage of being the first comers in most of the great area they traversed. They were men not merely of exceptional gifts but of complementary talents—Clark the administrator, engineer, and practiced woodsman; Lewis the scientist, artist, and writer.

As scientific explorers they set a mark which Frémont might well envy. They made careful observations of temperature and weather, records of the miles traveled, and notes on flora and fauna. Lewis, in particular, wrote descriptions of the natural scenery—for example, the Great Falls of the Missouri—possessing vividness and charm. They drew outline maps, plans, and miscellaneous sketches of high value. They were keenly observant of Indian customs, dress, and economy; Lewis' description of how an Indian tepee was made, erected, and used is almost a model piece of exposition. They took skins of some animals not before known—a badger, for example—and described others so closely that identification became easy. They collected botanical and geological specimens.

Lewis and Clark stand at the head of our explorers; but—and it is no derogation of their merits to say so—they suffered from some unescapable limitations. Their scientific instruments—only a sextant, a chronometer, and a spirit level—and their mathematical and astronomical knowledge were alike inadequate for the accurate fixing of positions. Of necessity their measurements of distance were rough. Their smattering of geology being slight, their interest in it was restricted. They passed over areas rich in gold and silver, the region of the Montana gold rush, without noting the gold flecks in the sands and the nuggets on the bars. After all, they were path-breakers; specialized work had to come later.

Zebulon M. Pike, too, was a pathbreaker, one whose much greater deficiencies were partly beyond his control. His bold southwestern expedition of 1805-7 had in view an apparent object, the reconnoitering of Spanish borderlands for the benefit of a possible future American expeditionary force, which was not scientific and which he could not avow in the book he later published. But Pike's narrative (1810), compared with Frémont's, is scientifically thin and literarily dull. He had no instruments to reckon latitude or longitude, no talent for map-making, no real interest in wild life—little beyond a narrow military outlook. His descriptions of natural scenes are flatter than the Llano Estacado of the Texas Panhandle.

More could be said for the expedition of Lewis Cass (then territorial governor of Michigan) in 1820 along the shores of Lake Superior and to the headwaters of the Mississippi; for objects partly political (he wished to treat with Indian tribes) and partly geographical. He suggested to the War Department that it give him an officer of engineers to make a correct chart, and "some person acquainted with zoology, botany, and mineralogy," the result being that Henry R. Schoolcraft and David B. Douglas accompanied him to care for these interests. Douglas made a handsome collection of plants for Dr. John Torrey to classify and describe; Schoolcraft penned an enthusiastic report on the resources of the country, calling special attention to the evidences of large iron and copper deposits. Though limited in extent, this was a highly successful piece of exploration—which failed, however, to discover the true source of the Mississippi.

Meanwhile the Corps of Topographical Engineers had come into existence. It worked at first in conjunction with the older Corps of Engineers (established in 1802) in special charge of the fortifications of the country. In 1831 the Topographical Bureau was made a distinct unit, to report directly to the secretary of war and receive orders from him. Complaint soon arose that its functions and authority were vague. A new law of 1838 therefore gave the Topographical Corps clearer rank and form, and the War Department at once issued explicit regulations dividing civil engineering from military engineering. By 1843 the Corps of Engineers boasted of one colonel, one lieutenant colonel, four majors, and 32 lesser officers.

One Dartmouth-educated officer of this corps, Stephen H. Long, seemed for a time about to establish a reputation like that later made by Frémont. He had helped chart some upper Mississippi Valley waters. Then, in 1819, the War Department assigned him to lead an expedition to the Rockies. He ascended the Platte and the South Platte the next year, discovered the peak that bears his name, and did valuable work in the upper valley of the Arkansas River. With him, as botanist, geologist, and surgeon, went Edwin James, a graduate of Middlebury College and a former student of John

Torrey's. It was James who, with two companions, was the first white man to ascend Pikes Peak; and using notes furnished by Long, who made no report, James furnished a vigorous two-volume *Account* of the journey with an atlas. Though this contained some useful data on fauna and Indians, it failed to hit the mark at which it was aimed.

• It did so for a reason which was probably not lost on Frémont, who undoubtedly read the volume with care. Long and James gave an unfavorable description of the trans-Missouri country, which chilled readers and furnished ammunition to Daniel Webster and other foes of rapid western growth. The expansive American people demanded optimism, not pessimism. Long turned to railroad construction, which he made his real career. When Frémont first joined Nicollet in 1838, Long was chief engineer of the Atlantic and Great Western.

These were the principal scientific explorations of the West under government auspices—Lewis and Clark's, Pike's, Lewis Cass's, Long's, Nicollet's—thrown upon the record when Frémont, like a trained and eager athlete, strode forward to begin his independent work. Eager to surpass them all, he had some reason to believe he could do it. He was but 28 in the year of his trial flight, the Des Moines survey, and but 29 in that of his first expedition, 1842. He was brilliant of mind, ardent of heart, fearless of temper. With the westward migration mounting like a torrent, and national expansion into California and Oregon a general hope, he could be sure of keen public interest in whatever he accomplished. His father-in-law Thomas Hart Benton and other men of power were ready to support him.

Other government explorers were still to come forward: W. H. Emory with his military reconnaissance of 1846-47; Howard Stansbury with his exploration of the Great Salt Lake region in 1849-50; R. B. Marcy with his work on the Red River in 1852; the men, including J. W. Gunnison and John Pope, who conducted the Pacific Railroad surveys of 1853-55. They were not destined to equal their predecessors. Of all those who came after Lewis and Clark, Frémont made much the greatest mark. How and why is it the greatest?

Taking account merely of his first three expeditions, he covered much more ground than any other man. He dealt with a wider range of scientific subjects and treated them, in general, more expertly. He united practical with scientific objects, striving to give useful information to emigrants, traders, and travelers. He imparted to his reports a higher literary quality (to which his wife Jessie contributed) than any other man we have mentioned. No other explorer after Lewis and Clark was half, nay, one-tenth as widely read or eagerly quoted; none exerted half as much influence on the westward exodus. In short, Frémont's exploratory work combined numerous types of excellence.

Any comparison of his reports with others brings his comprehensive scientific findings into clear distinction. Take his observations for four days, September 12, 13, 14, and 15, 1843, just after leaving Great Salt Lake. He gives two calculations of longitude and latitude, with a record of the means used in making them. He furnishes the altitude of a peak, the altitude of the pass between it and Bear River and the width and altitude of the Bannock River Valley. He identifies, with both English and Latin names, six varieties of trees found along Clear Creek, and one in the pass. He gives the temperature of some hot springs. He records thermometer readings at various hours, chiefly sunrise and sunset, but once at midnight. At eight points he inserts comments on the quality of the soil. Indeed, these four days include an emphatic statement on the fertility of the river and creek system in the Great Salt Lake area that swayed Brigham Young and the Mormons in their emigration of 1846-47.

It was Frémont who did most to dispel the impression, created by Long and others, that the trans-Missouri plains were barren. He writes repeatedly that the land is generally excellent, that water alone is needed, and that adequate moisture is often available. "The soil of all this country," he writes July 11, 1843—meaning the wide region between the Mississippi and the Rockies—"is excellent, admirably adapted to agricultural purposes, and would support a large agricultural and pastoral population." The first scientifically trained man to reach the shores of the Great Salt Lake, he supplied

the earliest adequate account of it. He was first to reach Pilot Peak on a short cut across the Nevada Desert upon the general line later defined as the Hastings Cutoff. He did some very real pathfinding in southern Oregon, northern California, and the Sierras. He was the first man, as Alexander von Humboldt noted, to describe the volcanic character of certain Rocky Mountain areas, and to dilate on the volcanicity of the Cascades.

His greatest geographical contribution, however, lay in his identification and description of the Great Basin, the huge region whose special peculiarity had escaped B. L. E. de Bonneville and others. Frémont invented the term still used for the basin, or collection of small basins, between the Wasatch Range on the east and the Sierra on the west—a mountain-rimmed region with no outlet for its streams. Even yet, a better description of its major characteristics than that given by Frémont's reports would be difficult to find. The image of the Great Basin haunted Frémont from the moment he first seized and broadly sketched it. He had explored much of its high periphery on the Utah, the northern, and the California sides. "It cannot be less than 400 or 500 miles each way," he writes, "and must lie principally in the Alta California [then including Nevada-Utah]. . . . Of its interior but little is known. It is called a desert, and from what I have seen of it, sterility may be its principal character; but where there is so much water, there must be some oasis."

Frémont's estimate of distances was fairly correct. The Sierra and the Wasatch, their steep faces fronting each other, lie 400 to 500 miles apart. The mountain and plateau country between is much eroded, but since the stream cannot run to the sea, the eroded materials fill the space between the barren peaks to a great depth. An artesian well driller near Huxley, Nevada, has brought up well-preserved redwood from a depth of 1,900 feet. During the glacial period, when rains were heavy, two great bodies of water filled the basin; one, covering much of present-day Nevada, now termed by geologists Lahontan Lake, the other in Utah (with Great Salt Lake its vestige) called Lake Bonneville. Frémont's reference to an

oasis is echoed by modern writers who have called the settled fertile parts of Utah "an oasis at the foot of the Wasatch." When Humboldt in his final volume adopted the explorer's term, he remarked : " Our knowledge of this configuration is one of the chief points of Frémont's great hypsometrical investigations in 1843-44."

While we cannot call Frémont a great man, we can maintain that as an explorer—the first distinctively scientific explorer produced by the United States—he had qualities of greatness. Alas that his career was warped into inferior channels, while he was yet in his early prime, by the Mexican War. The sun that rose so auspiciously on the well-equipped young man marching purposefully and joyously into the West of 1838 sank into the dust and commotion of California in 1846. The smoke of battle hid complications and frustrations that Frémont, turning back from Oregon on what he deemed an imperative summons, could never have guessed ; and before it cleared away the quarrel with General S. W. Kearny had forced him from the Army and deprived him of government support in further exploration. His scientific labors were virtually ended, for the two privately equipped expeditions which he later led failed of significant results.

A new America emerged from the Mexican War, enlarged by one third in extent, and faced by an exigent problem in tying East and Far West together by road, telegraph, and railway. It needed scientific explorers and map-makers ; it needed just such dedicated skill and rich experience as Frémont could have supplied. Had fate been kinder, he might have done much to examine the new resources, assist emigrants, and find the best paths of transcontinental commerce. All the glitter and adventure of his later career—the California senatorship, the Mariposa fortune quickly vanished, the presidential nomination of 1856, the major-generalship in the Civil War, the railroad presidency—were a poor compensation for what he and the country lost. But the high achievement of the eight years, in which he not only kept the field of western investigation but led it, remained a permanent possession, and his record of these years may be counted one of our proud American stories.

Scientist and Humanist: Can the Minds Meet?

I. I. RABI*

FOR more than half a century, from the period of the Darwinian controversy till the end of the 1930s, science remained almost unchallenged as the source of enlightenment, understanding, and hope for a better, healthier, and safer world. The benefits brought by science were and are still visible everywhere one looks. Human ills are being overcome; food supplies are becoming more abundant; travel and communication are quick and easy; and the comforts of life, especially for the common man, are vastly increased. In the person of Albert Einstein science enjoyed a world-wide respect almost akin to reverence and hardly equaled since the time of Isaac Newton.

In the last decade or so we have begun to detect signs of significant change. The knowledge and techniques developed through science for the illumination of the mind and the elevation of the spirit, for the prolongation and the amelioration of life, have been used for the destruction of life and the degradation of the human spirit. Technological warfare, biological warfare, psychological warfare, brainwashing, all make use of science with frightening results.

I do not suggest that warfare and its attendant horror is a result of modern science. Ancient Greece, at the zenith of that remarkable civilization, in a land united by a common culture and a common religion, destroyed itself in a bitter and useless war more thoroughly than Europe has done in the present century even with the aid of electronics, aviation, and high explosives. What I mean is that our epoch in history, which has produced one of the greatest achievements of the human race, may be passing into a twilight that does not precede the dawn.

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Science, the triumph of the intellect and the rational faculties, has resulted in the hydrogen bomb. The glib conclusion is that science and the intellect are therefore false guides. We must seek elsewhere, some people say, for hope and salvation ; but, say the same people, while doing so we must keep ahead of the Russians in technology and in the armaments race. Keep the fearsome fruits but reject the spirit of science. Such is the growing mood of some people at the present time. It is a mood of anti-intellectualism which can only hasten the destruction which these people fear. Anti-intellectualism has always been endemic in every society, perhaps in the heart of every human being. In times of stress this attitude is stimulated and people tend to become impatient and yield to prejudice and emotion just when coolness, subtlety, and reason are most needed.

We are told, and most of us believe, that we are living in a period of crisis unequalled in history. To be cheerful and proud of our accomplishment and optimistic of the future is almost akin to subversion. To be considered objective and realistic, one must view with alarm. Yet we are not living in a period of hard times and unemployment ! We have, I cannot say enjoyed but, rather, bemoaned, a period of prosperity and world-wide influence for good unequalled in history. Nevertheless, despite all, we seem to be acquiring a complacency of despair. In this mood, unable to adjust to new values, we hark back to a past which now looks so bright in retrospect, and we raise the banner of " Back to the Humanities."

What is meant by the slogan " Back to the Humanities " ? What are people really looking for ? What knowledge, what guidance, what hope for salvation, what inspiration, or what relief from anxiety does a practical-minded people like ours expect from a knowledge of the humanities ? They do not wish to re-establish the study of the Greek and Roman classics in their original tongues, or to recreate the Greek city-state in Metropolitan Boston.

I venture to suggest that what they mean is something quite different from what is meant by the humanities. The progress of civilization in the modern age, especially in our own century, has

brought with it an immense increase of knowledge of every kind, from archaeology to zoology. More is known of the history of antiquity than was known to Herodotus. We have penetrated farther into the heavens and into the innermost secrets of the structure of matter than anyone could have dreamt of in previous generations. We have run through the satisfactions of representational art to the puzzling outlines of abstract art. The increase in physical comfort and in communication has brought with it a whole set of new problems. The great increase in population necessarily means further crowding and additional social and cultural adjustment. Under these circumstances, it is natural for people to look for guidance toward a balanced adjustment.

What people are really looking for is wisdom. To our great store of knowledge we need the added quality of wisdom.

Wisdom is inseparable from knowledge ; it is knowledge plus a quality which is within the human being. Without it knowledge is dry, almost unfit for human consumption, and dangerous in application. The absence of wisdom is clearly noticeable ; the learned fool and the educated bore have been with us since the beginnings of recorded history. Wisdom adds flavor, order, and measure to knowledge. Wisdom makes itself most manifest in the application of knowledge to human needs.

Every generation of mankind has to remake its culture, its values, and its goals. Changing circumstances make older habits and customs valueless or obsolete. New knowledge exposes the limitations and the contingent nature of older philosophies and of previously accepted guides to action. Wisdom does not come in formulas, proverbs, or wise saws, but out of the living actuality. The past is important for understanding the present, but it is not the present. It is in a real sense created in the present, and changes from the point of view of every generation.

When change is slow, the new is gradually assimilated, and only after a number of generations is it noticeable that the world is really different. In our century enormous changes in the circumstances of

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our lives and in our knowledge have occurred rapidly—in every decade. It is therefore not at all surprising that our intellectual, our social, and our political processes have failed to keep abreast of contemporary problems. It is not surprising that we become confused in the choice of our goals and the paths which we must take to reach them.

Clearly a study of the Greek and Roman classics in their original tongues or even in a good translation is a most rewarding venture in itself. This literature has never been surpassed in any age. And in reading this literature one is struck by how applicable the situations are to the present day. The fact that we can still be moved strongly by this literature is an illustration not merely of the constancy of structure of the human nervous system but also of the fact that great art and profound insights have a character which is independent of any age.

The humanities preserve and create values ; even more they express the symbolic, poetic, and prophetic qualities of the human spirit. Without the humanities we would not be conscious of our history ; we would lose many of our aspirations and the graces of expression that move men's hearts. Withal the humanities discern but a part of the life of man—true, a vital part but only a part.

It has often been claimed that the chief justification for the study of the humanities is that it teaches us values. In fact some people go even further and claim that the humanities, in which literature, parts of philosophy, and the history and appreciation of the fine arts are included, are the *only* sources of values other than the more spiritual values of religion.

This claim cannot pass without challenge. It cannot be said that it is absurd, but rather that it is a symptom of our failure in the present age to achieve a unity and balance of knowledge which is imbued with wisdom. It is a symptom of both ignorance and a certain anti-rational attitude which has been the curse of our century. It betrays a lack of self-confidence and faith in the greatness of the human spirit in contemporary man. It is the expression of a form of self-hatred which is rationally unjustifiable although deeply rooted.

Man is made of dust and to dust returneth ; he lives in a universe of which he is also a part. He is free only in a symbolic sense ; his nature is conditioned by the dust out of which he is made. To learn to understand himself he must learn to understand the universe in which he lives. There is more than enough in this enterprise to engage the boldest, the most imaginative, and the keenest minds and spirits of every generation. The universe is not given to us in the form of a map or guide. It is made by human minds and imaginations out of slight hints which come from acute observation and from the profound stratagems of experiments.

How can we hope to obtain wisdom, the wisdom which is meaningful in our own time ? We certainly cannot attain it as long as the two great branches of human knowledge, the sciences and the humanities, remain separate and even warring disciplines.

Why is science, even more than the humanities, as a living component of our society so misunderstood ? A glance at a current dictionary definition may give us a clue.

Science : "A branch of knowledge dealing with facts or truths systematically arranged and showing the operation of general law."

This definition brings to my mind a solitaire player or head bookkeeper for a mail-order concern. It is a partial truth which is also a caricature. It is out of harmony with the picture of Archimedes jumping out of his bath crying Eureka ! or Galileo in misery and degradation during his trial and recantation, or Einstein creating the universe out of one or two deductions from observation and a profound aesthetic feeling for symmetry. Nor does this definition account for the violence of the opposition to scientific discovery which still exists in the same quarters in our own age.

It is often argued that physical science is inherently simple, whereas the study of man is inherently complicated. Yet a great deal is known of man's nature. Wise laws for government and personal conduct were known in remotest antiquity. The literature of antiquity shows a profound understanding of human natures and emotions. Not man but the external world was bewildering. The world of

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nature instead of seeming simple was infinitely complex and possessed of spirits and demons. Nature had to be worshiped and propitiated by offerings, ceremonies, and prayers. Fundamentally nature was unpredictable, antagonistic to human aspiration, full of significance and purpose, and generally evil. Knowledge of nature was suspect because of the power which it brought, a power which was somehow allied with evil. There were of course always men who had insights far beyond these seemingly naïve notions, but they did not prevail over what seemed to be the evidence of the senses and of practical experience.

It was therefore not until late in the history of mankind, not until a few seconds ago so to speak, that it was recognized that nature is understandable and that a knowledge of nature is good and can be used with benefit ; that it does not involve witchcraft or a compact with the devil. What is more, any person of intelligence can understand the ideas involved and with sufficient skill learn the necessary techniques, intellectual and manual.

This idea which is now so commonplace represents an almost complete break with the past. To revere and trust the rational faculty of the mind—to allow no taboo to interfere in its operation, to have nothing immune from its examination—is a new value which has been introduced into the world. The progress of science has been the chief agent in demonstrating its importance and riveting it into the consciousness of mankind. This value does not yet have universal acceptance in this country or in any other country. But in spite of all obstacles it will become one of the most treasured possessions of all mankind because we can no longer live without it. We have gone too far along the direction which it implies ever to turn back without unimaginable disaster.

The last world war was started in an attempt to turn back to dark reaction against the rational faculty and to introduce a new demonology into the world. It failed as will every other such attempt. Once the mind is free it will be destroyed rather than be put back in chains.

To my mind the value content of science or literary scholarship lies not in the subject matter alone ; it lies chiefly in the spirit and living tradition in which these disciplines are pursued. The spirit is almost always conditioned by the subject. Science and the humanities are not the same thing ; the subject matter is different and the spirit and tradition are different. Our problem in our search for wisdom is to blend these two traditions in the minds of individual men and women.

Many colleges and universities are trying to do just this, but there is one serious defect in the method. We pour a little of this and a little of that into the student's mind in proportions which result from mediation between the departments and from the particular predilections of the deans and the president. We then hope that these ingredients will combine through some mysterious alchemy and the result will be a man educated, well-rounded, and wise. Most often, however, these ingredients remain well separated in the compartmentalized mind, or they may form an indigestible precipitate which is not only useless but positively harmful, until time the healer washes it all away.

Wisdom is by its nature an interdisciplinary quality and not the product of a collection of specialists. Although the colleges do indeed try to mold the student toward a certain ideal of the educated man of the twentieth century, it is too often a broad education administered by specialists. The approximate counterpart to this ideal of the educated man, embodied in a real living person, is a rare being on any college faculty. Indeed, in most colleges and universities the student is the only really active connecting link between the different departments. In a certain paradoxical sense the students are the only broadly educated body in the university community, at least in principle.

The affairs of this country—indeed of almost every country—whether in government, education, industry, or business, are controlled by people of broad experience. However, this broad experience rarely includes the field of science. How can our leaders

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make wise decisions now in the middle of the twentieth century without a deep understanding of scientific thought and feeling for scientific traditions? The answer is clear in the sad course that events have taken.

This anguished thought has impelled many scientists, often to their own personal peril, to concern themselves with matters which in the past were the exclusive domain of statesmen and military leaders. They have tried to advise, importune, and even cajole our leaders to include the scientific factor in our fateful policy decisions. They have been successful, but only in special instances.

I am not making a plea for the scientist statesman comparable to the philosopher king. The scientist rarely has this kind of ambition. The study of nature in its profundity, beauty, and subtlety is too attractive for him to wish to forsake his own creative and rewarding activity. The scientist away from his science is like an exile who longs for the sights and sounds of his native land. What the scientist really desires is for his science to be understood, to become an integral part of our general culture, to be given proper weight in the cultural and practical affairs of the world.

The greatest difficulty which stands in the way of a meeting of the minds of the scientist and the non-scientist is the difficulty of communication, a difficulty which stems from some of the defects of education to which I have alluded. The mature scientist, if he has any taste in these directions, can listen with pleasure to the philosopher, the historian, the literary man, or even to the art critic. There is little difficulty from that side because the scientist has been educated in our general culture and lives in it on a day-to-day basis. He reads newspapers, magazines, books, listens to music, debates politics, and participates in the general activities of an educated citizen.

Unfortunately this channel of communication is often a one-way street. The non-scientist cannot listen to the scientist with pleasure and understanding. Despite its universal outlook and its unifying principle, its splendid tradition, science seems to be no longer

communicable to the great majority of educated laymen. They simply do not possess the background of the science of today and the intellectual tool necessary for them to understand what effects science will have on them and on the world. Instead of understanding, they have only a naïve awe mixed with fear and scorn. To his colleagues in the university the scientist tends to seem more and more like a man from another planet, a creature scattering antibiotics with one hand and atomic bombs with the other.

The problems to which I have addressed myself are not particularly American. The same condition exists in England, France, and indeed in all other countries. From my observation we are perhaps better off than most. Our American colleges and universities, since they are fairly recent and are rapidly expanding, have not settled into complacency. They are quite ready to experiment to achieve desired ends. Our experimental methods have taught us how to impart the most diverse forms of knowledge. Although wisdom is more elusive, once the objective is clear that the ultimate end of education is knowledge imbedded in wisdom we shall find ways to move toward that ideal. The ideal of the well-rounded man is a meaningless ideal unless this sphericity means a fusion of knowledge to achieve balanced judgment and understanding, which are qualities of wisdom.

The problems are, of course, depressingly difficult. In the secondary schools—with their overcrowding, their teachers overworked and inadequately trained, the school boards, and, not least, the powerful clique of professional educators who form a society within our society—all that is unique and characteristic of science and mathematics is being crowded out of the curriculum and replaced by a fairy tale known as general science. The colleges and universities are in much better shape, although the great population increase is about to hit them with masses of inadequately prepared students. Most people would be quite content with a holding operation in which we could maintain the quality that is already possessed.

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However, it seems to me that something could be done even now with the faculty members of the colleges and the universities. Wisdom can achieve a hybrid vigor by crossing the scientist and the humanist through a more extensive and intensive interaction within the faculty. Why should not the professor of physics be expected to refresh himself periodically by taking a course in aesthetics or comparative literature or in the Greek drama ? Why shouldn't the professor of medieval philosophy or the professor of ancient history take a course in modern physics and become acquainted with the profound thoughts underlying relativity and quantum mechanics ? It would let in some fresh air, or at least different air, to blow away some of the cob-webs which grow in the unventilated ivory towers.

Somewhere a beginning has to be made to achieve a more architectural quality in our culture, a quality of proportion and of organic unity, and it is reasonable to start with the members of the faculties of our institutions of higher learning. Here are all the strands of the tapestry which is to represent our culture, living in close proximity but separate, adding up to nothing more than the sum of the parts. The scientists must learn to teach science in the spirit of wisdom and in the light of the history of human thought and human effort, rather than as the geography of a universe uninhabited by mankind. Our colleagues in the non-scientific faculties must understand that if their teachings ignore the great scientific tradition and its accomplishments, their words, however eloquent and elegant, will lose meaning for this generation and be barren of fruit.

Only with a united effort of science and the humanities can we hope to succeed in discovering a community of thought which can lead us out of the darkness and the confusion which oppresses all mankind.

New Horizons For World Trade

G. KEITH FUNSTON*

GIVEN certain conditions, we can hopefully expect to see in the next 25 years a boom in newly-developing countries such as the world has never known. Not the least of those conditions would be an increased understanding among the peoples of the earth, and the place of trade in our lives.

There once was a man, a giant of his time, who boiled down the complexities of world trade to a very simple truth. He said: " . . . A must take some of B's produce, otherwise B will not be able to pay for what he would take of A." Benjamin Franklin's simple truth sets in perspective one of the most haunting of the twentieth century problems: world trade and the free world's job of living together.

It is a curious commentary on the course of history that in some ways the United States has come the full circle since Franklin's day. His most fruitful years were spent explaining the needs and hopes of a "have-not" America to the Old World. There is not much question today that Americans are still badly in need of explanation and understanding. We are still living in a world in which the basis of our existence is challenged. And once again we find ourselves in many ways a "have-not" nation, though what we lack are not the manufactured goods we once required, but critical raw materials needed to feed twentieth century technology.

The parallel with the past, I think, ends there. The burden of free-world leadership has been thrust on us—and we have assumed it. The great majority of Americans know today that finding workable solutions to major economic problems is nothing less than a world-wide search—and that search has become a matter of national policy.

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We have learned, in the course of our growth, that it is not necessary for some people to be poor so that others can be rich; any more than it is necessary for some nations to be poor so that others can flourish. We know, in fact, that we shall never again be comfortable as long as there is desperate want in the world. This has prompted historian Arnold Toynbee to predict the twentieth century will be remembered not for the conquest of disease, or for splitting the atom, but for "having been the first age since the dawn of civilization . . . in which people dared to think it practicable to make the benefits of civilization available for the whole human race."

We have discovered, finally, that trade relationships draw their real strength from the mutual benefits to be gained. A clear road to peace and prosperity has emerged. It lies through the two-way flow of goods, technical knowledge and, above all, capital. The opportunities this presents to us are enormous.

If we could view our world through a single window, we would see that many of our recent fears have come to nought. On the other hand, many of our hopes have materialized beyond our expectations. Europe, its economic confidence restored, is no longer plagued by the fear expressed in the adage "when America sneezes the world catches pneumonia." All around us we see world trade on the upswing, foreign investments growing, newly developing countries improving their living standards, inflationary pressures being held in check, and conditions for freer exchange of foreign currencies into dollars being achieved.

Our window-on-the-world cannot, of course, look into the future. But we do not need any special vantage point to tell us that the people of the world have seen a vision of a better life—and there are several things about that vision that are inescapable. The first is that it is spreading to every corner of the globe. The second is that in the free world venture capital is really the stuff the vision is made of. The years ahead are going to take unprecedented amounts of capital for heavy fixed investments. We have tried at the New York Stock Exchange to estimate the scope of what is likely to be required

throughout the rest of the free world for the next five years. We find, for example, that more than \$90,000,000,000 of new capital will be needed to maintain the recent growth in per capita output.

Unaided, the people of the world are not equipped to supply that amount of investment money. But with American help there is the prospect that a goodly amount of it can be raised. And the need of the United States for raw materials and for new world markets demands that we undertake the job more seriously than we have ever attempted.

If we do—and there is tangible evidence that such a move is under way—we can look forward to the great boom in newly developing countries I have mentioned.

Does the enterprising, equity-minded U. S. investor fit into this picture? I am absolutely convinced that over the long term he does. Experienced investors have already shown they are alert to the opportunities overseas. Not since the 1920's has there been so great a willingness to export capital—first, by investing in U. S. companies with overseas operations, and, second, by investing directly in foreign securities. Paced by American firms doing foreign business, U. S. private investments abroad in the years between 1946 and 1954 almost doubled to \$26,500,000,000. And in 1954 those investments earned a record \$2,500,000,000. Moreover, to meet the needs of a people willing to venture, U. S. bankers and brokers have increased their foreign activities.

Despite the present willingness of many Americans to risk their money overseas, one cautionary note must be sounded—particularly where direct foreign investments are concerned. I believe that at present—and for reasons I shall outline in a moment—a sharp line must be drawn between the experienced investor and the man who is new to share ownership.

At the Stock Exchange we are deeply committed to the concept of broadening ownership. We are convinced also that capitalism's greatest moments are still to come, and that they will be ushered in in an area of "mass investments." We look to millions of middle-

income Americans to invest some of their money in our great businesses and to share the rewards and risks of ownership in an expanding economy. Ten years ago the prospect of "mass investments" was a dream. Today we see it happening, and it places a special responsibility on the Exchange community in its efforts to broaden the ownership base. That responsibility poses a peculiar problem for us in the field of foreign investments.

We certainly are aware of the great opportunities abroad. We also are convinced that as we strengthen capitalism in the United States we must be interested in strengthening it elsewhere—particularly in areas where the potential is greatest. We must recognize, too, the unhappy fact that there is a yawning gap between opportunity and fulfilment . . . between what the investment climate actually is and what the investor would like it to be. The realities throw a shadow over the prospect of profits. The pitfalls are many and the warning signals have not been made clear enough. Let me give you an American's point of view on some of the realities.

First, there are the legal and regulatory uncertainties. American dollars are subject to multiple exchange rates that are complicated enough to confuse anyone but a mathematician. Discriminatory tax laws often choke off the very flow of venture capital other countries most need. If the American investor decides his opportunities warrant pressing ahead anyway, he is likely to run up against laws limiting the amount of profits he can withdraw, and regulations governing the amount of capital he can transfer. Finally, in certain countries he is all too frequently apt to meet with the most painful penalty of all—outright expropriation. In an era when many sovereign nations are just beginning to feel the first nationalistic effects of independence, the expropriation problem is by no means a dead or dying issue.

Fortunately, without expecting the millennium in removing existing obstacles, or denying that the U. S. Government imposes some rather massive investment barriers through the capital-gains levy and the double tax on dividends, there are good indications that progress is being made overseas. The McGraw-Hill Publishing

Company reports that some 35 countries have passed or proposed laws to encourage American investments. New techniques are being developed to simplify exchange rates and speed the two-way flow of funds. Many governments are reappraising their tax laws and offering new incentive to American corporations.

These are welcome developments and should be encouraged. They are a true barometer of the investment climate abroad. As the climate improves, it is logical to expect improvement in a second major obstacle—the area of “full disclosure.”

There is more to this barrier, however, than the reluctance to bare corporate secrets. Capitalism throughout the world has many faces. In the past two years I have had the opportunity to visit some ten countries. To the American businessman there is nothing stranger than the insight such visits provide into the differences between the various brands of capitalism.

“Enterprise” may go under the same generic name but often the similarities are slight. It is fact, not criticism, to say that Americans do not understand fully the pressures still operating on the businessman abroad. And it is fact, not criticism, to say that the American overseas counterpart still does not grasp what has happened in the United States since the turn of the century. He does not understand, for example, a system that is fiercely competitive, that fights for markets instead of sharing them, that reports earnings and sales instead of concealing them and, most important, that woos stockholders instead of running from them.

The sight of one of our stockholder meetings, attended by hundreds or thousands of owners, would fill many an overseas businessman with consternation. I do not believe that in the United States we are especially determined to export our particular brand of capitalism, but more and more foreign businessmen are taking a long look at the full-disclosure principles that have become basic to our public companies.

There are, of course, implications to American capital moving overseas that are broader than purely economic matters: the United

States was built with the aid of foreign money. This pattern has been reversed. For Americans to increase further the movement of their capital abroad will assist other nations to achieve a higher living standard and will help them decide the kind of capitalism they are going to have. There probably is no more important decision for the free world to make. For if other countries move toward the idea we are developing of a broader, man-in-the-street kind of ownership—we shall have developed the strongest and most effective nonmilitary weapon against communism.

I believe that in the free world we are united behind a common economic goal—however difficult it may be to achieve. That goal calls for removing barriers impeding the flow of capital and we shall achieve it simply because the United States needs raw materials, the free world needs American capital, and the opportunities for all concerned are fabulous. This is the twentieth-century application of Franklin's maxim about "A" and "B."

I believe the way has been cleared for fuller disclosure of corporate data. I believe we can look toward the day when other governments will ease or remove frustrating regulations on foreign capital. I believe history is on the side of this. It was Emerson who said, "We rail at trade, but the historian of the world will see that it [trade] was the principle of liberty, that it settled America, and destroyed feudalism and made peace . . . and kept peace"



BOOK REVIEWS

THE LETTERS OF THOMAS WOLFE,
edited by Elizabeth Nowell. Scribner's.

Reviewed by MILTON HINDUS

Characteristically, this book of Wolfe's letters is a behemoth. Wolfe was one of those writers—and there were better ones than he who did the same thing (e.g. Rabelais and Whitman)—who never used one word where three might serve just as well. He emphatically did not believe in the virtue of concentration and vigorously defended his own position against Scott Fitzgerald's friendly recommendation to him of the attractions of "the novel of selected incidents." Wolfe replied to Fitzgerald (in a letter printed here but already available to us in *The Crack-Up*): "You say that the great writer like Flaubert has consciously left out the stuff that Bill or Joe will come along presently and put in. Well, don't forget, Scott, that a great writer is not only a leaver-outer but also a putter-inner, and that Shakespeare and Cervantes and Dostoevsky were great putter-inners—greater putter-inners in fact, than taker-outers—and they will be remembered for what they put in—remembered, I venture to say, as long as Monsieur Flaubert will be remembered for what he left out."

Wolfe was perfectly right, though not perhaps as regards his own work—which was what Fitzgerald was talking about. The final result alone counts. We may become impatient with a wordy writer, but if he manages to transmute quantity into power, we are not going to complain. With Wolfe, unfortunately, it wasn't always so. He gives the impression sometimes of a man being buffeted by a high wind and unable to distinguish the wind from inspiration. That is not, I confess, how he appeared to me when I was an undergraduate and he was, together with Romain Rolland, one of my favorite writers. But the years have not been kind to either Wolfe or Rolland.

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There are certain books which go to pieces for us without our ever rereading them. Our experiences and reflections confirm the insights of certain artists, so that they gain with the passing of time, while ruthlessly breaking down others which once appeared valid.

Wolfe was born in 1900 and died about two months short of his thirty-eighth birthday. For a writer who was so prolific and so much in the public eye, he made curiously little money. In a letter to Charles Scribner III, written not long before his death, he says that the \$3,000 that he had to spend in settling a libel suit represented 10 per cent of the earnings of his whole literary career. Since Wolfe had begun to earn money in 1929 with *Look Homeward, Angel*, that would work out to something between \$3,000 and \$4,000 a year, which, even considering that these were depression years, is pathetically little. Wolfe never worked for Hollywood, though tempted, and when his novel *Of Time and the River* became a success in 1935 he began worrying and wrote his editor: "How unreasonable and contradictory our natures are! It would be fantastic and comical to know that I had written a 'best seller,' it would be wonderful to get the money that would come from it, and yet I would be troubled by it too—to know I had written a best-seller, was a best-seller kind of writer: I would worry then to know what was wrong with my book, whether you and I had done something to cheapen it and make it popular." He needn't have worried on this score, because he could not help being himself at all times. One of his early critics perceived "a dangerous facility" in Wolfe's work, and we know what he meant by this: that Wolfe could turn it on or off like a tap of water. But this facility never became the kind of adroitness which could serve purposes alien to his own feelings. Except on one or two occasions, he never broke into the big-circulation magazines. Had he gone to Hollywood he would have done even worse

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than Fitzgerald did there, for Fitzgerald (to his ultimate loss) was gifted with a cleverness and detachment that Wolfe never had.

Elizabeth Nowell, who introduces this correspondence, succeeds in outlining the shape of Wolfe's abortive career as a man of letters very distinctly. The three most important relationships of Wolfe's adult life were with George Pierce Baker, the director of Harvard's famous 47 Dramatic Workshop, with Maxwell Perkins, his editor at Scribner's and with Aline Bernstein. Through Baker he tried to become a playwright but failed to secure production by any but small amateur groups. Under Perkins's intelligent and sensitive handling, the importance of which he himself acknowledged in the dedication of his second book, Wolfe very nearly became a popular novelist. But he eventually broke with Baker and even with Perkins, who had become a kind of father-surrogate to him, not so much because he found fault with them, but—as he himself recognized—because of his strong drive toward a condition of loneliness. This, indeed, is the central theme of his work: the book that became his first novel was originally supposed to be called "Alone, Alone" and the epigraph was to be the well-known stanza from Coleridge's *Ancient Mariner* that begins with those words. With Aline Bernstein, who has long been known to have played a very important role in Wolfe's life (and with whom, incidentally, only a fraction of the correspondence that exists has been published in this book), he broke too.

Wolfe's letters confirm certain notions one has always had concerning his literary affinities and origins. He is probably the most distinguished descendant in the line of Whitman—more distinguished than Sandburg, who is a literal-minded imitator of the master's manner, or even than Hart Crane. And it is understandable, too, that his admiration of the Bible should be expressed even more ecstatically than Whitman's. In 1930 he writes Perkins: "I am all alone and sometimes I doubt: do you think I'll ever amount to anything? I read Shakespeare, Racine, the English Poets, and

the Bible. I have not read the Bible since I was a child—it is the most magnificent book that was ever written: when Walter Scott was dying, he called for 'The Book' and they asked him 'What book?' and he said 'There is only one'—and it is true. It is richer and grander than Shakespeare even, and everything looks sick beside it"

Wolfe's work (and these letters) betray a more immediate parentage in Joyce and Proust. What might have been guessed from his *Story of a Novel* can be pinned down decisively here. It is from Proust that he took his emphasis on sensory impressions as a way of resurrecting the dead past; from Joyce came some of the verbalism (without the control) as well as the idea that every man was on a journey in search of a lost father.

The "insatiable bookishness" that Wolfe speaks of in one of his early letters is a source of both strength and weakness. He read, he admits in another of his letters, "not analytically but voraciously," and compares his habits in this respect to those of Coleridge. His Gargantuan appetite found no better food than print. He was born to devour libraries in the manner of Johnson or Gibbon, though odd little mistakes in the references to books seem to show that he could not always keep from being swamped by what he read. That he was not sufficiently critical he admitted, but even this admission does not prepare us for his coupling of the names of Wassermann and Mann—some sort of pun there perhaps!

I must say that these letters have changed my opinion of Wolfe somewhat; he now appears to me as something better than an epigone of Whitman. I am not sure if in the canon of his own work this may not prove to be his strongest and most sympathetic volume. Certainly, I was moved by his character as it comes through here. He was a very hard worker, and scrupulous in his effort to give back to the world more than he took from it. I kept thinking afterward of Keats's friend, the painter Benjamin Robert Haydon, who relied for his lasting fame on vast historical canvases which are mostly forgotten but who

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lives on in the autobiography which was a mere by-product, a shaving of his major effort. Wolfe did not intend these letters as an apologia, and yet they serve to justify his life.

Like three of the great English Romantics of the early 19th century—Keats, Shelley, Byron—and like two other Romantics of our own time—Hart Crane and Dylan Thomas—Wolfe died before his fortieth year. What he might have become had he lived longer we can never know, but what he was, now that the ballyhoo has died down a little, becomes increasingly plain. Keats, shortly before his death, asserted that it was his destiny to be “among the English poets.” A generation later, he was elevated by Matthew Arnold not only “among the English poets” but to a position “with Shakespeare.” Wolfe will never achieve such glory, but it is safe to say, fifty-six years after his birth, that he will be remembered among the American writers of our time.

BECOMING, by Gordon W. Allport. Yale University Press.

Reviewed by CHARLES M. HARDEN

Political scientists who are disturbed by the crescendo of demand to “psychologize” their profession will profit from this lucid book. Delivered in 1954 as the Terry Lectures at Yale, the essay reflects Allport’s belief “that modern psychology is in a dilemma. Broadly speaking, it has trimmed down the image of man that gave birth to the democratic dream.” If this diminution had some utility, Allport argues that positivistic psychology, with its stress upon man as an “empty organism,” fails to supply the needs of democratic theory “that man possess a measure of rationality, a portion of freedom, a generic conscience, appropriate ideals, and unique value” (Pp. 99–101).

The reasoning culminating in these conclusions begins with an examination of the philosophical roots of various psychological

schools. Consciously oversimplifying, Allport dilates on two polar conceptions, the “Lockean and Leibnitzian traditions.” For Locke, nothing could be in the intellect that was not first in the senses; but Leibnitz added the table-turning qualification: “save only the intellect itself”! Locke’s formula underlies the various stimulus-response, behavioristic psychologies which fascinate so many contemporary American social scientists. Leibnitz’s conception is more congenial to Gestalt, cognitive, and phenomenological psychologies and (paradoxical as it may seem to political scientists) furnishes better than Locke’s the philosophical base for morally responsible adults.

Allport urges the study of man as a unique personality. This approach involves some depreciation of tendencies to isolate common traits, drives, needs, attitudes, dimensions, or behaviors in favor of dealing with the whole man. It implies criticism of superficial inferences from animal psychology. “I venture the opinion that all of the animals in the world are psychologically less distinct from one another than one man is from other man.” It requires shifting the focus of study from man’s past to his future—hence “Becoming.” This refocusing is assisted by Allport’s interpretation of infantile experience, which can inflict “an ineradicable scar” on the emergent character, but which also is capable of laying the foundation for a lifetime of “continuous and unimpeded growth.”

To fill the “empty organism” of positivistic psychology without invoking a magical “self” to explain all psychic phenomena, Allport advances the “proprium.” The proprium contains “all aspects of the personality that make for inward unity,” including (among others) self-identity, ego-enhancement, rational agent, and self-image. One aspect, “propriate striving,” refers to the propensity of human beings to set goals for themselves—Raold Amundsen is the telling example. Propriate striving radically qualifies the almost sovereign efficacy of “tension reduction” as the explanation for many psychologists of motivation. Here the analysis raises the

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question of conscience, which may begin with "internalized" Freudian musts and must-nots but which, in normal, rational adults includes much more—"specific habits of obedience give way to generic self-guidance" by means of values.

Enter cultural determinism's claim that values are socially prescribed and that personality is "merely the subjective side of culture." In deflating this claim, Allport arrives at the question of freedom of the will

—"no other issue causes such consternation for the scientific psychologist." Allport's defense of a degree of freedom, his stress upon the question of the meaning of man's existence, and his concluding remarks on religion and democracy all help fulfill his intention to prepare the way for a psychology more adequate to human needs. Finally, the author relies throughout on the kind of evidence political scientists traditionally have understood and employed.



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Book Reviews

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Organized Religion and the American Creed

PETER F. DRUCKER*

THE unique relationship between religion, the state, and society is perhaps the most fundamental — certainly it is the most distinctive — feature of American religious as well as American political life. It is not only central to any understanding of American institutions. It also constitutes the sharpest difference between American and European institutions, concepts, and traditions.

This country has developed the most thorough-going, if not the only truly secular state. It is also the oldest secular state — even on this Continent. When the First Amendment to the United States Constitution categorically banned any “Establishment of Religion” for the infant Republic, nearly half of the constituent Thirteen States still had fully established State Churches; and the others either had definitely preferred or supported churches or, at the least, imposed religious disabilities of various kinds on members of minority-denominations.

In Europe — even in those countries where a thorough separation of state and church has been attempted — the old Establishment is still visible everywhere: in government salaries for the clergy, in government subsidies to church schools or foreign missions, or in government salaries to teachers of religious instruction in public schools. Within the traditional boundaries of European Christendom only those countries that have deified the state itself

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are free from such traces of the old Establishment as would always have been held unconstitutional in this country ; and of course those countries have simply " established " the new totalitarian creed as the official state religion.

The United States is, however, also the only country of the West in which society is conceived as being basically a religious society.

More than a hundred years ago Tocqueville wrote : " There is no country in the whole world in which the Christian religion retains a greater influence over the souls of men than in America. Religion is the foremost of the institutions of the country." And this is still largely true today.

Organized religion plays a part in our society which is altogether unknown elsewhere. One could not conceive of an English, a German, or a French business corporation going to the priest or minister to find out something about a man considered for an executive job ; in this country it is standard procedure. Church membership, except in the very largest cities, is everywhere taken for granted. Social life and community activities center around the churches ; the Girl Scouts meet in the basement of the church, the Parent Teachers Association in the Parish House and so do the Road Commissioners in small communities. One of the local ministers opens the luncheon meeting of Rotary or the annual drive of the Community Chest.

These, of course, are outward and superficial observances, and perfectly compatible with a completely irreligious life. But at least these outward signs indicate a positive emphasis on the part of American society on religion, on active membership in a church, and on active participation of the church in the life of the community. Indeed, one of the most remarkable features of American life is the speed with which this concept of a religious society is made to embrace new social institutions.

We do not have, to be sure, a " Christian trade union federation " such as is commonplace on the Continent. It is a concept alien alike

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to our tradition of political action and of spiritual life. Yet it is quite wrong to conclude therefrom, as practically every European labor leader has been doing, that our labor movement is "non-religious," perhaps like that of Great Britain. On the contrary this totally non-denominational labor movement may well be much closer to organized religion than the typical European "Christian" union. There exists the closest and most intimate bond between the Catholic Church and some locals of United Automobile Workers or the United Steel Workers, between Protestant churches and some locals of the Rubber Workers, or between Jewish Congregations and Garment Workers' locals in New York.

This dual relationship : strictest separation between state and church and closest interpenetration of religion and society, has been characteristic of this country from the start of its independence. The same Congress that wrote the principle of separation of state and church into the Constitution in perfectly unambiguous form : "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," also established as a matter of course chaplains for both its houses. The same Congress provided in the first United States legislation regarding the military, the Act of March 3, 1791 ("An Act for raising and adding another regiment to the military establishment of the United States") expressly for the appointment and pay of a regimental chaplain. Many people know that the famous phrase "a wall of separation between Church and State" was coined by Thomas Jefferson. But few people realize that this phrase is to be found in a letter that Jefferson wrote to a religious group, a group of New England Baptists, a letter which expresses a profound belief in the religious basis of society and concludes with the words : "I reciprocate your kind prayers for the protection and blessing of the common father and creator of man, and tender you for yourselves and your religious association assurances of my high respect and esteem."

But even more important than the co-existence of secular state and religious society is the relationship in which the two are placed in the American creed.

Their co-existence has often been believed to be mere intellectual slovenliness, an unwillingness to be logical, fuzzy thinking and muddling through. Actually, in this country secular state and religious society have not and cannot be conceived as contradictions ; they are necessarily complementary to each other. Again let me quote Tocqueville : " I am certain that the Americans hold religion to be indispensable to the maintenance of republican institutions." It is basic to the American creed that a society can only be religious if religion and the state are radically separated, and that the state can only be free if society is basically a religious society. This belief, however confused its formulation, underlies all American approaches to the political and social treatment of religion and to the social and individual value of religion. By its very nature the sphere of the state has to be an autonomous sphere, a sphere entirely of the "natural reason." But also, by definition, a free society is only possible if based solidly on the religious individual. The one without the other simply makes no sense — nor does the European formulation of an absolute in which both state and society must be either religious or non-religious.

This leads to the basic American concept : the state must neither support nor favor any one religious denomination. That would be " Establishment," if not " prohibition of the free exercise of religion," and strictly forbidden by the First Amendment to the Constitution. But at the same time the state must always sponsor, protect and favor religious life in general. The United States is indeed a " secular " state as far as any one denomination is concerned. But it is at the same time a " religious " commonwealth as concerns its general belief in the necessity of a truly religious basis of citizenship.

This has given rise to two problems ; the first, what precisely is " religion " ? The second, where to draw the line between the constitutional ban on anything smacking of " Establishment " or of a " prohibition of the free exercise of religion " and the compensatory obligation to support and favor religious life ? But only the first question, that of the meaning of the term " religion," have we by now thought through at all.

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The key word in the first sentence of the First Amendment to the Constitution is "religion." This was not synonymous with "creeds," "belief," "ideology," or "Weltanschauung" in 1790; nor is it to be taken as synonymous with these words today — as the Supreme Court has emphasized in a whole series of decisions during the last two decades on the Flag Salute, on the exemption from military service of "Ministers of Religion," and on the rights of "Conscientious Objectors." If there ever had been any doubt the Constitution itself would have dispelled it. It provided separately, in the second sentence of the First Amendment, for the protection of "creeds," "beliefs," "ideologies," or "Weltanschauung," through forbidding Congress from making any law "abridging the freedom of speech and of the press." It is only "religion" however that is specifically protected in its "exercise" — a protection which has always been recognized as being both, by position in the text, and by language, more exalted and stronger than the mere ban on the abridgment of free speech.

And "religion," today as in 1790, clearly means two things. To be a "religion," a creed must be supernatural. It must be based on an acknowledgment of a power above man — Jefferson's "common father and creator of man." To be a religion a creed must be based on divine reason and divine will rather than solely upon natural reason. It must find its sanction not in the human mind, not in morality and ethics, but in an appeal to the supernatural. Otherwise, as the Conscientious Objectors' decisions of the Supreme Court reiterated, it is not a religion but an ideology.

Secondly, a religion must seek its kingdom in the other world. A creed, however infallible it claims to be, is not a religion — as the Constitution and the American tradition understand the term — if it aims at establishing its kingdom in this world. This also means, however, that a religion must acknowledge the existence of a "kingdom of this world," that is, of an autonomous realm of natural reason, an expression of which is the Constitution and the allegiance of American citizenship. It need not approve of this world. Its

adherents may be taught to scorn this world and all its works, and refrain from all participation therein — let alone from subservience to it — as the Jehovah's Witnesses do. But they must recognize that there is a separate and autonomous realm of this world, however worthless and contemptible it may be. If a creed fails to draw this line between the Kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world and thereby denies either, it is not a "religion" as we understand the term.

The dualism between strict separation of church and state and closest communion between religion and society which is at the center of the American creed, makes absolutely no sense, unless we recognize that the claim of the Constitution to the allegiance of the citizen, is based on its claim to be an expression of purely natural reason and of nothing else. Then it follows that the state while indifferent to all religions, must demand complete non-interference in the state from all churches, and must at the same time respect and sponsor religious life. For it is of the essence of natural reason that it recognizes its own limitation and incompleteness while, at the same time, proclaiming its autonomy.

There are clearly difficulties in this concept. The millennial sect — the Jehovah's Witnesses today, the early Mormons a century ago — always comes dangerously close to refusing to accept the autonomy of the kingdom of this world, yet is clearly a "religion" within the common usage of the term. Perhaps even more difficult is the problem presented by Church schools of any denomination. The school in this country is part of the body politic: it prepares for our common citizenship and, therefore pertains to the "kingdom of this world." At the same time, however, the claim — whether of the Catholic Church, of Orthodox Jewry, or of High-Church Episcopalians — that children must be brought up in the faith if they are to live in it as grown-ups, is undoubtedly well founded, and thoroughly in conformity with the American concept of religious life.

But at the same time the American concept of religion is clear enough to make it certain that the totalitarian creeds are not entitled to the protection afforded religion under the First Amendment. It is

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not the fervency of belief or the claim to infallibility that makes a "religion" in the American meaning of the term, but the nature of the belief and its relationship to the two "kingdoms." The totalitarian creeds do not seek their basis in the supernatural. Their sanction lies in natural reason alone. Their kingdom is exclusively of this world; they neither respect nor accept an autonomous realm of natural reason but aim at swallowing up state and government in an infallible ideology. Whatever protection they are entitled to under the Bill of Rights, it is not under that first and supreme guarantee of freedom of religion on which all other of our freedoms rest.

Much less clear is the line between that governmental act which constitutes legitimate, indeed required protection and furtherance of religious life, and that act which constitutes "establishment of religion" or a "prohibition of its free exercise," in other words, forbidden interference with religious life or forbidden intervention on behalf of one denomination. One, perhaps the major, reason for our difficulty here is the fact that until recently we had no need to try to find the line. Lately, however, the problem has come up in several forms; and it is a reasonable assumption that it will stay with us.

The way we have handled the problem in the few cases that have come up so far is nothing to be very proud of. The *cause celebre* is of course the Supreme Court Decision in the McCollum Case. I am convinced that it is a thoroughly untenable decision on ordinary legal grounds alone.

It assumed that the Fourteenth Amendment extended to the several states the entire Bill of Rights including the first half of the first sentence of the first Article which enjoins Congress not to make a law respecting an establishment of religion. This assumption was made, so to speak subconsciously, for the problem had never come up before. Actually, it is a most dubious assumption. Historically, it is practically certain that the intention of the drafters of the Bill of Rights was to make Establishment of Religion another area exclusively reserved to the States in addition to the areas specifically

enumerated in the Constitution itself. For at the time the Bill of Rights was written, Establishment or Disestablishment was a crucial issue in all Thirteen States. Only two, Virginia and Rhode Island, had disestablished. In five states : New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maryland and South Carolina a State Church was still officially established. The remaining six States had various religious qualifications for full citizenship.

The Supreme Court majority further read the whole sentence " Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof " as saying the same thing twice. But this would not only be most unusual in the Constitution which otherwise errs on the side of brevity. It is also certain from all the sources that the sentence was meant to do two distinct and separate things : to make it impossible for the Federal Government to interfere in the fights over Establishment and Disestablishment raging in every one of the Thirteen States except Rhode Island ; and to make it impossible for the Federal Government to interfere with the citizens' religious freedom.

Finally, the Supreme Court majority which ruled that it was unconstitutional for a school district to grant " released time " for religious instruction because to do so interfered with the religious freedom of an atheist school child, was forced by its own logic to the absurd conclusion contradicting its entire agreement, that the phrase in the Constitution that forbids Congress to make a law respecting an Establishment actually means the very opposite, namely, that the Federal Government controls the question of Establishment anywhere within the States.

But the most important point is not the constitutional one, but that the decision missed the basic problem : that the American creed does not just establish a " secular " state but presupposes a religious society. It missed the point that " secular " in the American language does not mean " laic " ; it means " non-sectarian." And the basic relationship between religious life and political power cannot, therefore, be founded on a purely negative policy of non-encouragement.

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It requires a positive policy of impartial encouragement of all religions and of all truly religious life and activity in American society.

The fundamental difference between the European concept of the "secular" state which is a concept profoundly hostile to religion, and the American concept of the "secular" state which is based on a religious society and on the furtherance of religion, is, in the last analysis, a difference in origins. The European concept is originally a political concept. Its starting point was the attempt to make possible political stability in a country that had lost its religious unity. It started out with the assumption that religion is a political nuisance and that religious belief is a threat to political unity and stable government. From there — the starting point of Richelieu's original Protestant policy — the road led to toleration and, finally, to anti-clericalism and to secularism. Nothing is quite so obvious to the European politician, no matter what his political beliefs, as that a "secular" state is not one that is neutral in matters of religion but one that is opposed to religion — at the very least it frowns on any social influence of religion.

In the American creed, however, the origin of secularism is not political but religious. Its parents were not the politicians of the nation state, but two great religious thinkers, Roger Williams and Jonathan Edwards. The European concept is based on the firm belief in the supremacy of the political. The American concept is grounded in the firm belief in the incomparable value of the religious life — a value not necessarily superior to all others but necessarily of such an entirely different character and nature as to make it unique. The separation of state and church is thus in the American creed primarily a need of religion itself.

This tradition is not a specifically American one. In fact, it traces back through Nicholas of Cusa, Dante and St. Bonaventura all the way to St. Augustine. It is thus one of the oldest of the religious traditions of the West. But in Europe the tradition — despite its eloquent exposition by Leibnitz and by the great Cardinal, St. Robert Bellarmine — was by and large lost under the impact of Reformation

and Counter-Reformation. In this country however it became dominant.

Being a religious tradition many of its consequences are religious rather than political and thus lie well outside the scope of this paper. But there are also political consequences. One of them is, for instance, the complete absence of anti-religious or even anti-clerical movements in American history. Indeed, the very forces in society which in Europe led to anti-religious movements, all aiming at eliminating religion as a force in social life, produced in this country specifically religious movements within the Churches, the various "liberal" movements which have had as their main purpose the strengthening of the bond between organized religion and society. And the fact that in this country religion never "lost the working masses" — to the point where the American worker may be the real strength of most major religious denominations in this country — is also directly traceable to the unique American tradition of a secular state made possible and kept free by a religious society.

Obviously this tradition does not in itself guarantee either a free state or a religious society. It does not "produce" — let alone automatically — a flourishing religious life (all it tends to produce are flourishing church-membership figures). It certainly does not by itself give certain promise of spiritual well-being or of a spiritual answer to the crisis of our time. But it is a foundation — both for a religious people and for a free political order. As such it is the greatest achievement of the American political spirit, and the one on which all others rest.

American Literature Since 1896

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH*

BETWEEN 1896 and World War II a new American literature was created. No other half-century in United States history saw more profound changes in the tone, method and subject matter of its important books. In no other half-century did writers exercise so direct and immediate an influence upon the attitudes of so large a public. Edgar Allan Poe, Walt Whitman, Henry David Thoreau and Herman Melville were lonely voices whose influence spread slowly and who were heard by a relatively small minority of the American people. H. L. Mencken and Sinclair Lewis, to take two examples, were read and cited at every level of literacy and within a few years helped to change the thinking of a considerable section of the public.

Today Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner loom larger in the consciousness of European readers than even the most popular of the earlier American writers ever did. They may be no more popular than James Fenimore Cooper and Mark Twain once were, but unlike Cooper and Mark Twain, they are accepted as part of the literary mainstream and as models for imitation rather than as curious isolated individuals. In a certain sense the new American literature has been more important at home and abroad than any previous literature had ever been.

It has been an exciting half-century, though few could have guessed at the time. At the turn of the century Americans were looking back, not forward, and all the major classics of the nation's first flowering had already been written. In fact, if there ever was an age

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for which the disparaging adjective "genteel" furnishes the most fitting description, it was the period around 1896.

As essayists, critics and editors, Brander Matthews and Richard Watson Gilder represented the prevailing taste. Thoreau had declined into John Burroughs ; Henry James had declined into Edith Wharton, who was just publishing her first stories. It is true that Stephen Crane's "The Red Badge of Courage" (1895) was a brief sensation before it was all but forgotten for a generation, and that the decorous William Dean Howells had been for some years mildly irritating many people with his polite realism. Looking back at them we can see or convince ourselves that we can see the beginnings of a new mood. But it hardly seemed such to most readers at the time, and it is not too much to say that few could have guessed what the post-war literary world was going to be like any more than they could guess what the great world would be like socially, politically or economically.

Moderation and respectability seemed to be at last as permanently established in the one as security, peace and that liberty that "slowly broadens down" were established in the other. Continental literature was still commonly regarded as unfortunately marred by bad taste and when a prominent American publishing house launched a series to introduce Guy de Maupassant, Gustave Flaubert and Theophile Gautier to American readers, the selection had to be kept so innocuous as to omit the most characteristic works of each. Edwin Markham's "The Man With the Hoe" (1899) was probably the most widely read American poem of a generation, and Elbert Hubbard's "A Message to Garcia," published the same year, was probably the most popular piece of prose.

Nearly half a generation was to pass before James Huneker, the first influential American critic to attempt to popularize the "dangerous" European writers, began writing. High on the best seller list for 1896 were Harold Frederic's "The Damnation of Theron Ware," more or less in the manner of Mrs. Humphry Ward's "Robert Elsmere," which had created a sensation a few years before, and

Charles Sheldon's "In His Steps," the most phenomenally successful of all the What-would-Christ have done? novels. Five years later Alice Hegan Rice's "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" was to start the vogue for those "glad girls" who continued to delight a certain class of readers for a whole generation as the treacle flowed from the pens of Mrs. Rice, Kate Douglas Wiggin, Gene Stratton Porter and Eleanor Porter. The last in Eleanor Porter's Pollyanna series appeared the year the *Lusitania* was sunk (in 1915), taking down with it so much of the pre-war world good as well as bad.

It would be easy to overstress this date and take it as the dividing line between the old and the new. Actually Theodore Dreiser, certainly a key figure, had published "Sister Carrie" in 1900 and though it was withdrawn by the publisher as offensive it was reissued in 1907. More significant is the fact that Edgar Lee Masters' sensationally successful "Spoon River Anthology" was published in 1915 and that Van Wyck Brooks (who was later to celebrate so successfully the earlier literature but who began as a prophet of the new) published "America's Coming-of-Age" also in the year the *Lusitania* went to the bottom.

On the other hand, it is not possible to doubt that World War I had a great deal to do with the public's willingness to accept in literature various attitudes and subject-matter which it previously had found irrelevant at best. William Dean Howells' too-often quoted remark that the "smiling aspects" of life were, after all, the most characteristic of the United States, no longer seemed so obviously true to Americans who already saw a world war facing them. Man and society were not what they had supposed them to be. They were forced to admit that great wickedness and depravity, crime and suffering were not, as they had liked to think, so unusual as to be almost anachronisms. It had certainly become less obvious that the smiling aspects of life were the most characteristic of the United States or of any other land. Suddenly they had become aware that modern man was still capable of doing, thinking and feeling unspeakable things. Why should not literature treat what it was no

longer possible to deny? The genteel tradition was swept away with breath-taking quickness.

A kind of "realism" which once would have been called mere brutality, a kind of "frankness" which once would have been called obscene, and a kind of pessimism which once would have been dismissed as morbidity, were soon spread large over the most widely discussed books. Typical examples were the "frank" "Jurgén" (1919) by James Branch Cabell, the "realistic" "Winesburg Ohio" (1919) by Sherwood Anderson and the "pessimistic" "Waste Land" (1922) by T. S. Eliot. H. L. Mencken published the first of his "Prejudices" the same year that "Jurgén" appeared and six years later Dreiser, one of Mencken's favorites, reached the height of his reputation with "An American Tragedy," in which he combined "realism" with a moral nihilism. Even more significant of the change in public taste, for the very reason that they had no literary merit to recommend them, were the celebrations, sometimes frank and sometimes hypocritical, of the exploits of what came to be called, after the title of one of the books, "Flaming Youth."

As is almost inevitable during periods of revolution, both critics and readers were usually violently partisan. Either they rejected the new literature completely or they hailed it indiscriminately, seeing all its protagonists as equally important and all its characteristics as equally admirable. Now it is much easier to discriminate between major and minor figures and, what is even more important, to analyze characteristics and to distinguish limitations from excellences.

Even at the time, unsympathetic critics frequently complained that the new writers were almost wholly "destructive," and that they undermined the existing system of values without having anything to substitute. Defenders brushed this objection aside as no more weighty than the charge of ugliness, brutality and obscenity. Actually, however, it is evident enough that the new literature was largely concerned with rejections. Nearly all of it either implied or made explicit a rejection of gentility, of decorum, of squeamishness, and of the easy assumption that, fundamentally, contemporary life was a

good life. It ridiculed provinciality, patriotism, and cultural complacency. As satire or polemic it was vigorously effective. But it certainly was less successful in suggesting what the good life would be.

Some, like Dreiser, seemed to be saying that no such thing as a "good life" is possible. Others, like Sinclair Lewis, whose *"Main Street"* (1920) was the most widely read of all books in the new tradition, seemed to assume that when "culture" had replaced "provinciality," the good life would arise spontaneously — though it often was pointed out even during the heyday of his popularity that Mr. Babbitt was more satisfactory as an example of what Americans should not be than Carol Kennecott was of what a truly cultivated and civilized woman should be. Thus Dreiser and Lewis represented two attitudes whose fundamental difference was inadequately recognized when the new literature was regarded as all of a piece. Radical pessimism on the one hand and a rather easy optimism on the other seemed less irreconcilable than they were because those who were separated by the wide gulf between the two philosophies nevertheless made common cause in their attack upon contemporary American civilization.

If 1915 is only a rather arbitrary date for the beginning of the first phase of modern American literature, 1929 marks much more clearly its end. The sudden collapse of the material prosperity which the "avant garde" of the Twenties had despised inevitably shifted attention from the cultural deficiencies of the United States to economic and political questions. The most immediate, superficial and short-lived consequence was the sudden vogue of the "proletarian" novel, play and poem — "proletarian" usually meaning not merely that the subject was the working class but that the treatment was didactic and more or less orthodox Marxism.

During a brief period, a sizable group of writers, most of them unheard of before, engaged the major part of the attention of both critics and the literature-conscious section of the public. But the school did not produce a single work now commonly regarded as of permanent importance, widely read, or, indeed, much remembered.

The economic depression, however, produced a less obvious yet more profound effect on the whole tone of contemporary literature than increased concern with political and economic questions. During the Twenties the intellectual tended to be what we now call "dis-engaged" and to accept the role of destructive critic. In fact, he often seemed to wash his hands not only of the United States but of the human race. Mencken's conviction that all men were obscene clowns but that this fact is more evident in the United States than anywhere else clearly represents one aspect of this attitude. The expatriates who fled to Europe because, though a good life might be impossible anywhere, Europe permitted a more acceptable substitute for it than did the United States, represent another. But after 1929 expatriation, literal or symbolic, ceased to be a fashionable response to the contemporary situation — partly perhaps because it was becoming so evident that there was no longer any "better Europe" to which to flee and that, for good or ill, the world was becoming rapidly Americanized and could not be saved from either destruction or itself unless it was saved in the United States. Hence, in one way or another, the writer found himself compelled to be "engaged."

One may get some idea of what this means from John Steinbeck, whose "*Grapes of Wrath*" (1939) was sometimes wrongly taken as the last and best of the proletarian novels but who has since made it plain that for him the most important of all themes is not economic, political or cultural but the conflict between moral good and moral evil in man himself. An even better insight is possible if one examines the work of Hemingway and Faulkner, the two living American writers generally regarded both in Europe and at home as best.

Chronologically they are almost exact contemporaries. Yet because one accepts and the other rejects the philosophy of the Twenties, they belong to different literary generations. Hemingway, whose "*The Sun Also Rises*" was published in 1926, is an expatriate of the post-war years. Faulkner, whose first major work, "*The Sound and the Fury*," was published in 1929, belongs spiritually to a later period. The two names are often linked as "major novelists," yet

they are as dissimilar in style, subject-matter and philosophy as two writers — both of whom deal tragically with what are regarded as “unpleasant subjects” — could be.

Hemingway's simple style, which manages to achieve a classic clarity paradoxically based upon a vocabulary and syntax colloquial almost to the point of seeming illiterate, corresponds perfectly to the simplicity of his convictions. Life is represented as essentially meaningless and essentially valueless. Sometimes, at least, he seems to be implying that there is no escape from the realization of overwhelming emptiness except while one is satisfying the two strongest animal instincts — which he seems to take to be the desire for sexual intercourse and the desire to kill. Only the soldier, the hunter and the bullfighter have many opportunities to “live” — not only because they alone have frequent opportunities to kill but because sexual experience is sharpest when enjoyed as an interlude in the midst of violent death.

Mr. Faulkner is neither so clear nor so simple. He describes horrors which often seem even more unmitigated and more fantastic. But he does not celebrate them nor does he accept them as “what life is really like.” He certainly had Hemingway's literary generation in mind when, in the Nobel Prize Award Speech of 1950 he said of a type of writer that generation had often professed to admire: “He writes not of life but of lust, of defeats in which nobody loses anything of value, of victories without hope and worst of all without pity or compassion. . . . He writes not of the heart but of the glands. . . . It is (the writer's) privilege to help man endure by lifting his heart, by reminding him of the courage and honor and pride and compassion and pity and sacrifice which have been the glory of his past. The poet's voice need not merely be the record of man, it can be one of the props, the pillars to help him endure and prevail.”

Mr. Faulkner has only Hemingway as rival for the position of most esteemed novelist of this generation, perhaps indeed, the most esteemed writer in any form. Would any of the leading writers of the two preceding generations have regarded his pronouncement as

anything other than "unrealistic" and "sentimental"? If his credo is compared with Dreiser's rather than Hemingway's, the contrast is no less striking. Dreiser tirelessly insisted that the only story to be told of man was the story of his glands, or, as he usually put it even more vaguely, of "chemistry." And he insisted no less tirelessly that "naturalism" meant this conviction plus the further conviction that to write what Faulkner calls merely the record of man is the honest writer's only duty.

H. L. Mencken, to take another example, was a dazzling satirist and the master of a savage comic style — the most original and most effective since Mark Twain. But he, too, professed to believe that the history of mankind is no more than the record of man's rascality and folly and that the task of the writer is to keep this fact constantly before the eyes of his reader.

Recently some commentators have argued that American literature should and will react against the "negative" and "destructive" tone of so much twentieth-century writing by returning to Howells' insistence upon "the smiling aspects" of contemporary American life. They have sometimes proposed the industrialist and the business man as hero and bid the writer celebrate the triumphs of production and the high standard of living. They have, in a word, bid him be complacent and to tell his readers, not only that the Good Life is possible but that it has already been achieved.

Perhaps their advice will be taken. But it is far from certain that it will. If Faulkner really spoke, as he seems to have spoken, for our generation, then the literature of the future will be neither complacent nor despairing. It will again assume that the mind and the heart as well as the glands are valid subjects, that man can be something more than merely the victim of circumstance, and that the writer's business is to remind him of the things he is prone to forget rather than to confirm him in either complacency or despair.

Liberalism in the Fifties

GRANVILLE HICKS*

WRITING in the *Partisan Review* a couple of years ago, Irving Howe contrasted "the buoyant free-spirited cultural life of 1923 with the dreariness of 1953." Mr. Howe was scarcely out of diapers in 1923, but of course the record is clear. Things were happening in the early twenties: new writers emerging — Dos Passos, Fitzgerald, Hemingway; older writers winning new reputations — Anderson, Dreiser, Lewis. This was the decade of Harold Stearns's symposium, *Civilization in the United States*, and of H. L. Mencken's *American Mercury*. It was the decade of Oswald Garrison Villard's *Nation*, Herbert Croly's *New Republic*, and Heywood Broun's column in the *New York World*. It was the decade of the expatriates and their little magazines.

What held the twenties together, from the flappers' short skirts to the manifestoes in *Secession* and *Broom*, from the bathtub gin to La Follette's campaign for the Presidency, from all the articles and books about the new morality to all the articles and books about dollar diplomacy or Germany's innocence in 1914, was the spirit of rebellion. The motto of the decade was "Whatever is, is wrong." It was a motto that served, as Howe suggests, to free the spirit, to free it, perhaps, from some allegiances and responsibilities to which it might better have been bound, but in any case to free it. And the very magnitude of the revolt, to say nothing of its triumphs, real or apparent, made for buoyancy. Howe is quite right in supposing that it was a good time for a writer — or for any intellectual — to be alive and young.

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The cultural life of the fifties is very different, and *dreary* is a possible word for it. A sign of the times is the fact that a fairly large number of intellectuals, some of them on the youngish side, call themselves "conservatives," whereas in the twenties, at least until the brief upsurge of Humanism at the end of the decade, Irving Babbitt and Paul Elmer More seemed to be upholding a lost cause. More significant is the subdued tone in which most of the self-styled liberals speak of the status quo. Nor should we overlook the quiet dedication with which many intellectuals cultivate their own gardens.

There are several explanations of the change. Some people put the blame on McCarthyism, and it is true that dissent has sometimes been severely penalized in recent years. On the other hand, there have been outspoken dissenters who have got away with their outspokenness, and it seems probable that inner pressures are more important than outer. Some observers, for instance, point out that a certain section of liberalism became involved with communism in the Popular Front period of the late thirties and was thereby discredited. Here again there is some truth, but we must remember the many liberals who fought against communism in the thirties, to say nothing of the generation that has grown up since the collapse of the Popular Front.

The main reasons are the obvious ones. In the first place, the Cold War has taught the majority of intellectuals to measure American civilization not by an absolute standard but in comparison with Soviet communism, and, between the two, they have no doubt which they prefer. In the second place, they can see as clearly as anyone else that certain major evils have been eliminated or reduced in the past twenty years. We not only produce more goods than ever before ; we distribute them more equitably, so that we have probably come closer than any other society in history to the abolition of poverty. Workingmen, far from being the defenseless victims of exploitation, are protected both by the nation's laws and by their own powerful organizations. The underprivileged groups — women,

aliens, Negroes — draw nearer and nearer to equal rights. In short, many of the goals that the radicals and reformers of the twenties set themselves have been or are being achieved.

There are groups of intellectuals, however, with whom these considerations carry little weight, and a study of their views may help us to define — by a process of exclusion, so to speak — the role of liberalism in the fifties. First, there are a few Communists, fellow travelers, and so-called independent Marxists who insist that the United States is still a capitalist country and therefore subject to all the ills of capitalism. They point to what they call American imperialism and war-mongering, to the suppression of civil liberties, to the continuing discrimination against minorities, to the concentration of power in the hands of a few big businesses, and to the low standard of living that prevails in backward areas of our economic life. But their principal argument is "Wait and see." Prosperity, they insist, cannot last; a depression is inevitable, and that will prove their point.

The Communists believe not only that all is wrong in the United States, but also that in the Soviet Union all is right. The independent Marxists — for instance, Paul Sweezy and Leo Huberman and most of the contributors to their *Monthly Review* — do a little better than that, for they will grant that Russia isn't perfect. But they hold that it is a socialist country and therefore on the right track, whereas the United States is a capitalist country and *ipso facto* headed for disaster. The people on the fringe, such people as one often finds contributing to the *Nation*, are sometimes committed to dogma and sometimes not; in either case they use two sets of glasses, one for looking at the U.S.A., the other for looking at the U.S.S.R.

The second important group is made up of the Socialist intransigents, who have an easier position to defend inasmuch as they condemn the Soviet Union as well as — and sometimes much more than — the United States. To them the existing system in Russia is the antithesis of socialism and is anything but good. On the other

hand, they agree with the *Monthly Review* people that our prosperity cannot endure, though they are likely to speak of the weaknesses of a war economy instead of citing Marx. Principally, however, they differ from the independent Marxists in emphasizing our cultural shortcomings rather than the defects of our economic system.

Irving Howe, from whom I have already quoted, is the most vocal of the Socialist intellectuals. The author of valuable studies of Sherwood Anderson and William Faulkner, he has also collaborated in a book about Walter Reuther and the United Auto Workers and is currently writing a history of the Communist party of the United States. Like many critics in the past, and unlike most of his contemporaries, Howe is equally interested in literary and social problems. In fact, the large scope of his interests — and his dissatisfactions — is reminiscent of the twenties.

Howe is not only dissatisfied with the condition of our economy, with the distribution of political power, and with the state of American culture; he is particularly dissatisfied with the lack of dissatisfaction. In his piece for the *Partisan Review*, called "This Age of Conformity," he wrote: "We have all, even the handful who try to retain a glower of criticism, become responsible and moderate. And tame." The tameness of the intellectuals is the burden of his article. They are being domesticated, he complains; they are being taken over by the institutional world — government, the colleges, the big magazines — a world that needs them "because they are intellectuals . . . but does not want them *as* intellectuals." "Surely," he goes on, "this relationship must be one reason for the high incidence of neurosis that is supposed to prevail among intellectuals. A total estrangement from the sources of power, even a blind unreasoning rejection of every aspect of our culture, would be far healthier if only because it would permit a free discharge of aggression."

His attack is all embracing: the timidities of the self-professed liberals, the reactionary views of some ex-Communists, the new criticism and that related phenomenon, the new orthodoxy, with

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its enthusiasm for the dogma of original sin, the preoccupation with form, the preoccupation with symbols and myths. All are to him symptoms of the disease of conformity, which, he feels, is ravaging our culture. The only cure he can see lies in the spirit of rebellion, and one comes to believe that it is principally for the sake of rebellion that he has taken his stand with the Socialists. Neither here nor elsewhere do his arguments for socialism carry much conviction, but he can communicate with great effect the disgust that overcomes him when he contemplates the contemporary American scene.

At about the time he published his article in *Partisan Review*, Howe was helping to found a new magazine, *Dissent*, subtitled "A Quarterly of Socialist Opinion," which in the two years of its existence has stubbornly maintained "a glower of criticism." Its purpose is "to dissent from the bleak atmosphere of conformism that pervades the political and intellectual life of the United States; to dissent from the support of the 'status quo' now so noticeable on the part of many former radicals and socialists; to dissent from the terrible assumption that a new war is necessary or inevitable." Some of its editors and contributors are earnest and more or less orthodox Socialists, and it publishes a certain amount of Socialist theory, but mostly it is concerned with attacking the government, the neo-conservatives, and especially those liberals who have a good word to say for the way we live now in America. Much indignation is spent on such organizations as Americans for Democratic Action and the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, such magazines as *Commentary* and the *New Leader*, such individuals as Sidney Hook, Lionel Trilling and David Riesman.

It is in some ways a useful magazine, but too self-consciously devoted to what Matthew Arnold called "the Dissidence of Dissent." To say a good word for America is, in the minds of the editors, a shocking betrayal. Here is Mr. Howe again: "In the literature of liberal mythology America ceases to be a nation among nations, the major segment of international capitalist economy, and becomes instead an embodiment of the heart's desire which the brutish Euro-

pean intellectuals, in their malice or stupidity, insist upon maligning." Here is C. Wright Mills, crying out against "the curious American celebration, into which so much scholarly and intellectual energy now goes." Examples, he points out in a footnote, are "embarrassingly available," but, "unfortunately no one of them is really worth examining in detail."

Nothing would be easier than to brush aside *Dissent* as an expression of neurosis or nostalgia, as a bid for attention, or as an interesting exercise in the venerable American tradition of the cracked pot. But among its editors and contributors are persons one does not want to brush aside — for instance, Erich Fromm, who has written two revealing books about the problems of contemporary society, *Escape from Freedom* and *Man for Himself*. More recently he has examined the economic foundation of our culture in *The Sane Society*, and the views he expresses explain the appearance of his name on the masthead of *Dissent*. He will admit that in our super-capitalism men are not so cruelly exploited as they were a century ago, but he insists that most people are slaves. Not only are they treated as commodities; they think of themselves as commodities. Their material wants may be better supplied than ever before, but more fundamental human needs — needs of the mind and the spirit — are neglected. If this neglect continues, he warns, we are headed either for mass destruction or for the kind of universal slavery described by Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World*.

Dr. Fromm has a remedy — what he calls "Humanistic Communitarian Socialism" as embodied in the Communities of Work that have sprung up in France since the war. Since he does not propose to abolish large-scale industry and mass production, it is hard to take his proposal seriously. But it is precisely the impracticality of his remedy that indicates the emotional intensity with which he has rejected his and our culture.

If you read much contemporary fiction, you know that the mood of rejection is widespread. Take, for instance, William Gaddis' massive and confused novel, *The Recognitions*, which finds fraud and

forgery the foundations of our society. Or there is Vance Bourjaily's *The Hound of Earth*, which sees our self-destructive impulses at work both in the atom bomb and in so commonplace an institution as a department store. A few years ago Allan Seager wrote in *Amos Berry* about a businessman who not only repudiated our business civilization lock, stock, and barrel, but was so disgusted with his former boss, as an embodiment of it, that he shot him. Richard Wright's *The Outsider*, Ralph Ellison's *The Invisible Man*, all three of Norman Mailer's books, and a great many other novels express a profound sense of alienation.

In *The Lonely Crowd* and some of the essays in *Individualism Reconsidered*, David Riesman has examined some of the causes of alienation. As everyone knows, Riesman is no advocate of conformity; to the concept of adjustment, as currently achieved by what he calls "other-direction," he opposes the concept of autonomy. But autonomy is also opposed to alienation. That is, Riesman believes that it is possible for the individual to be himself in our society and that our society is by no means wholly bad. He welcomes an economy of abundance, sees the increase in leisure as an opportunity for good, and even finds something to praise in the mass media.

Such moderation infuriates the intransigent critics of the status quo. Norman Mailer, for example, in *Dissent*, speaking as a Socialist, berates Riesman for pretending that the class struggle no longer exists, and then goes on to comment with some anguish on Riesman's appeal to the liberals: "In the enormous reversal of emphasis which characterizes Riesman's work — the absence of ruling classes, the replacement of competition by cooperation, the change in American character from the stereotype of the brash aggressive man to the other-directed man, one may well wonder whether Riesman, despite his sincere intentions to invigorate thought and to make people 'see' reality, is not really encouraging thought in circles, passive thought, but thought which gives the illusion of making strides, emitting energy, and approaching discovery. Is this not his basic

appeal to the liberal who wants precisely to have thought which elicits an aura of excitement but does not force him to relinquish to his ideas any important part of his ambitions or his comforts? . . . At last all things are equal, are justifiable — one is drawn to quietism and acceptance."

It might be felt that this was mere parody, that no one could seriously argue that David Riesman is an advocate of quietism and acceptance. But Mailer is in earnest. And at the end, after an emotional restatement of his faith in socialism, he voices the even more preposterous charge that Riesman's thinking "revolves around the old saw that the rich are miserable and the poor lead simple happy lives."

What one sees depends on what one looks for. Writing in *Perspectives*, Lionel Trilling maintained that the world of wealth and power was recognizing the intellectuals as never before. In rebuttal, Irving Howe admitted the fact but regarded it as a dangerous sign. As Robert Warshaw pointed out in a letter to *Partisan Review*, Mr. Howe has himself enjoyed some of this institutional recognition — has served on the staff of *Time*, is teaching at Brandeis University — but these experiences have not softened him. Sometimes he seems to be arguing in a circle: the intellectual would be better off without recognition because then he could attack society for not recognizing him.

Probably it is unsafe to generalize about the present status of the intellectuals. As Trilling asserts and Howe grants, the institutional world holds out some handsome opportunities, which seem to nourish some intellectuals and desiccate others. The more influence the intellectuals have, especially in government, the more acutely suspicious a large section of the population becomes. But if there has been no such net gain as Trilling seems to believe, there has been no such great loss as Howe maintains.

Even if it could be proved that the status of the intellectual has deteriorated, one would still have to ask whether this deterioration should be made the basis for a rejection of what we have now in

America. One would have at least to balance against it the great material gains that are being enjoyed by the majority of the people. Such a calculation is hard to make. One can imagine, as Aldous Huxley did in *Brave New World*, a society in which everyone is richly endowed with material goods and everyone believes himself to be happy and yet in which the life of the mind is dead. But, in spite of Dr. Fromm's gloomy diatribes, it is hard to believe that we have arrived at such a point or are in any imminent danger of doing so. If our cultural level is low — and, whatever else may be true, it is lower than any of us would choose — there is no evidence that it is low because our standard of living is high and, therefore, no reason to assume that we have to reject our material prosperity in order to raise it.

One's objection to the intransigents is not that they criticize contemporary America. On the contrary, that is why one values them. Along with much that is wrongheaded, they say much that needs to be said. Probably they are right in charging that some of us, in our desire to defend our society against attacks that seem to us both unfair and dangerous, are less critical than we ought to be. But somehow they work too hard at being critical. Some of them seem determined to coddle every eccentricity, to cherish every grievance, to inflame every sore spot and sharpen every rough edge, lest they find their discontent diminishing. And in the end one comes to distrust not so much their detailed judgments as the general quality of their feeling about contemporary life.

Of course, everyone plays his hunches, and the most anyone can do is to explain, insofar as he understands them, the circumstances that may have given him his particular bent. For myself, I have been living for the past twenty years in a small town in upstate New York and have earned my livelihood as a free-lance writer, a publisher's adviser, and an occasional lecturer. During these twenty years my income has remained nearly constant. In relation to my neighbors, I was rich in the thirties and comfortably well off in the forties, but today I am close to average. It cannot be said that

I regard prosperity as good for the nation because it is good for me, since, in terms of what a dollar will buy, it so far hasn't proved to be.

But all of us, I trust, can look a little way beyond our bank account and our credit rating. Having lived in one place for what is, as contemporary American experience goes, a long time, I am able to measure the course of two decades of American history in terms of a fairly large number of individual lives. I believe that most of my neighbors are better people than they were fifteen or twenty years ago. Certainly they are healthier: they eat better food, and they can and do pay for the services of doctors and dentists. They are also more generous, less suspicious of their fellow men, more inclined to participate in the life of the community. They have not become saints or sages, but most of them lead more satisfying and more useful lives than they did. Since I know of no reason for supposing that the factory and white-collar workers of my town — and they make up almost the entire population — aren't representative, I am encouraged to believe that prosperity is a good thing.

Nor do I personally find it unpleasant to live in a technologically advanced society. When we moved to the country twenty years ago, we had to accept rather primitive conditions, and we were willing to do so for the sake of country living. Now we have the country living together with almost all the comforts of urban life that we want: we have our running water, our electric lights, our central heat; we have the appliances that save labor in an important way; we have a car; we have a radio and a record player. It is true that we are offered a thousand gadgets we can't afford, but we don't need them and, for the most part, don't even want them.

When I look about at my neighbors, I see no evidence that they are living standardized lives. When a bunch of men get to talking about their work, as they sometimes do at a meeting of the fire company, it becomes clear that most of them have jobs in which they take a degree of satisfaction. But the more important part of their lives is led after working hours. The more I know, the more

I am fascinated by the diverse ways in which these people use their extra income and their extra time. This man has gone in for stock-car racing and that one for raising saddle horses. Tom devotes as much time to the fire company as he does to his job ; Dick grows gladiolas ; Harry spends two or three nights a week bowling. A list of their hobbies, avocations, and community activities could go on for page after page, and if not all the items could be considered praiseworthy, at least there would be no lack of variety. Most of them, as I have said, are factory workers, and probably for that reason, there is little nonsense about keeping up with the Joneses. In an upper-middle-class suburb, I am sure, there would be more of the sort of thing that bothers the dissenters, more jockeying for status, more concern with approval, less tolerance of differences. But the suburbs are not all of America, and if it is true that the workers tend to model themselves on the middle class, and in outward respects often cannot be distinguished from its members, there also seems to be a tendency on the part of many middle-class people to adopt the more relaxed manners of the workers.

Even if the transformation of our society could be measured solely in material terms — and I am convinced that it can't — it would still be important. Haven't we, for instance, achieved a large part of what socialism has traditionally set as its goal ? Isn't what we have exactly what most of the backward peoples everywhere on the globe would like to get ? Isn't it fair to say that the United States is riding the wave of the future ? The forces that are transforming the whole world have reached their highest development here, and our productive capacity holds out the best hope men have ever had that poverty can be abolished everywhere. Mere abundance of goods isn't enough, but surely it is the way to begin. As one of the most intransigent of British rebels, George Orwell, a favorite with many of our own dissenters, once said : " How right the working classes are in their ' materialism.' How right they are to realize that the belly comes before the soul, not in the scale of values but in point of time."

Reviewing Murray Kempton's *Part of Our Time*, Leslie Fiedler, who stands with the dissenters on some issues but not on others, took exception to Kempton's "philistine conviction that our major problems have all been solved." "How hard it is to be just in these matters!" he exclaims. "Of course, it is a fact that men without a dream have improved Negro-White relations, taught labor and management to mitigate their conflicts, extended social security, etc., etc. But the real and remaining problem that vexed those sensitive enough and desperate enough to dream the dream of community Mr. Kempton does not trouble to mention: the drying up of creativity, the flight to conformity, the obsession with violence, the enervating fear of war and poverty, the alienation from each other, from their work, and from the natural world itself." It is far from certain that the reforms of which Mr. Fiedler rather condescendingly approves were brought about by men without a dream, but at any rate they were achieved, whatever problems may remain.

A glandular optimist such as Morris Ernst may predict utopia by 1976, but most of us have less cheerful views about the future. In any case it is the essence of the human condition that the really important problems can never be solved. In C. P. Snow's *The New Men*, the narrator says of one of the characters: "For to Martin it was jet-clear that, despite its emollients and its joys, individual life was tragic: a man was ineluctably alone, and it was a short way to the grave. But, believing that with stoical acceptance, Martin saw no reason why social life should also be tragic: social life lay within one's power, as human loneliness and death did not, and it was the most contemptible of the false-profound to confuse the two." There is some such confusion, it seems, in Mr. Fiedler's thinking, as there is, at the opposite end of the scale, in Mr. Ernst's. That we cannot do everything is no reason for not doing what we can.

I am not counseling resignation, acceptance, passivity, but patience and hard work. As we used to be told by apologists for the Soviet Union, you can't expect everything to go smoothly in a revolution. No one should have been foolish enough to suppose

that the masses of the American people, given a high standard of living and a lot of leisure, would all make good use of them. They may learn to make better use of them later on, but there is no guarantee of that. Nevertheless, the fact that they have been given a chance to try may be regarded as a challenge rather than as a cause for despair.

It is the great weakness of the dissenters that they exaggerate the evils they attack, and particularly the evil of conformity. As Fiedler says, how hard it is to be just! Mass production depends on the fact that large numbers of people want or can be persuaded to think they want the same thing at the same time, but it is not true that the result is standardization. There are always people who want something different, and in an economy of abundance the demand is satisfied. While Dr. Fromm complains, justly enough, about "a bread which is tasteless and not nourishing," heaven knows how many housewives are baking their own bread — or, for that matter, how many householders have unearthed and begun to use an old-fashioned ice cream freezer. As Ernst points out in his *Utopia* 1976, a vast industry rests on the do-it-yourself idea, and a list of hobby magazines indicates the staggering variety of ways in which Americans spend their leisure hours.

But, the dissenters insist, the pressure to conform is always there. So it is, but it can be and is being resisted. A not too unsympathetic European observer, Czeslaw Milosz, commenting on America, speaks of "the spiritual death of people condemned to work hard all day and to swallow the poison of films and television at night." I suppose that Mr. Milosz might be convinced that the American working day has become fairly humane, but probably no one could make him believe that Americans not only can but actually do turn off their TV sets when they are bored.

The beginning of wisdom in our age seems to me to be summed up in the phrase, "You don't have to." "Are we," Allan Seager has asked, "to spend our lives using more or less valued articles to keep workingmen off the dole?" His reply is, "Yes, I guess we are."

Mine would be, "Not unless we choose to. Our productive system can be kept just as busy with worthy articles as with unworthy ones." In what seems to be an echo of his novel, *Amos Berry*, Seager goes on: "Probably most of these complainers drive cars and listen to phonograph records, though if consistency has any value they should play their own fiddles and walk." There is a better as well as a more practical consistency than that involved in a total rejection of the fruits of industrialism. It consists in taking from industrialism only what you want, in fiddling when you want to fiddle and in listening to the phonograph when you want to hear the masters, in walking when you feel like walking and driving a car when you have to get somewhere in a hurry. In practice, of course, everybody does make such choices, but most of us exercise our freedom of choice a good deal less than we might.

Making a series of choices is considerably less dramatic than damning a whole culture to hell and gone. The great trouble with moderation, the dissenters say, is that it leads so easily to passivity, and they have a point. Many intellectuals today are almost completely oblivious to political and social problems. Things are going along pretty well, they say to themselves, and if they aren't there's nothing we can do about it, and, some of them add, we just don't want to get in trouble. So they hole up in their ivory towers.

One doesn't have to be a hell raiser to regard passivity as a danger. We can't afford it, what with the threat of atomic war, the erosion of civil liberties, the persistence of inequalities. But these are evils about which the "responsible and moderate" intellectuals — the liberals — have done quite as much as the dissenters. They have, in all probability, done more, though they may have said less. One needn't endorse every act of Americans for Democratic Action, for instance, or the American Committee for Cultural Freedom, to believe that they have, in their different ways, had a healthy influence on contemporary American life.

The twenties were fun, and the thirties, in their grim way, were exciting. The fifties, by comparison, seem pretty dull. On the

one hand, everybody but the dissenting intellectuals is happy about American prosperity. On the other hand, nobody can really relax in view of the perils of fission and fusion. There are plenty of battles for the liberal to fight, but it is wearing to have to fight always on two fronts — against the Communists and against our own reactionaries. Issues are confused, and wherever one stands, one is likely to be embarrassed by some of the people who are also standing there.

Yet we cannot afford irresponsibility just for the sake of relieving our feelings and stirring up a little excitement. What most of us very well know, when we get right down to it, is that no one has a large enough view of the way in which human life is being transformed in this country and in the world to be entitled to make dogmatic judgments. "Blind unreasoning rejection" may be, as Irving Howe says, "healthier" than blind unreasoning acceptance, but it is not more intelligent. The United States is neither utopia nor a hell hole, and, if we cannot make it the former, we can keep it from becoming the latter. Not only because this country is a great power but also because it leads in the productive revolution, what happens here affects the entire world. The good old days when it was enough to be against the government have gone, and it is fortunate that the liberals, recognizing that fact, have grown responsible and moderate.



What Is Happening to American Culture?

DAVID MANNING WHITE*

IT was raining hard in Boston the evening of June 11, 1955. Maybe the 15,000 people who had crowded into Boston's Public Garden that evening hoped the downpour would stop, but they were willing to risk the soaking to watch Martha Graham and her company dance to music by Aaron Copland and Samuel Barber. Drenched they were for the entire two hours of Miss Graham's performance, but only a fraction of them left. Although the ballet was forced into an unanticipated intermission by a particularly strong outburst, the patience and attention of the huge audience moved Miss Graham into continuing.

More than 750,000 Bostonians and visitors to the city from a wide area partook of the rich variety of the 1956 Boston Arts Festival. Is this audience composed merely of the cognoscenti of *haute culture* the minority who sustain the art galleries, theatre, and ballet? Not by any means, obviously. And Boston's successful experiment in demonstrating that there need not be any contradiction between quality and a mass audience is being copied by several major cities throughout the country. It is only one sign among many that something important and fine is happening in the artistic life of the United States.

Nevertheless, there is so much criticism about the state of culture in the United States by well-meaning, sincere persons that I would like to present some evidence to the contrary. One is tempted to remind these critics that no country ever has achieved the complete integration of *haute culture* into the warp and woof of its

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everyday life. In the wishful memories of those who moon over the passed glories of Shakespeare's England it is seldom called to mind that bear-baiting was far more popular than any of Master Shakespeare's offerings. Who cares to remember that the same Rome that found a Juvenal proclaiming *mens sana in corpore sano* could also watch an Emperor Trajan celebrate his victory over Decebalus of Dacia in 106 A.D. with no fewer than 5,000 pairs of gladiators matched to the death ? And this in the name of amusement !

My purpose, however, is not to argue with my friends who refuse to allow a television set in their homes for fear they may be contaminated. With no equivocation I'll state my thesis : The mass media hold out the promise to the average man that a cultural richness no previous age could give him is at hand.

On March 11, 1956, the National Broadcasting Company invested \$500,000 to present a three-hour long premiere of Sir Laurence Olivier's "Richard III." This production, which motion picture critics have extolled in highest terms, was viewed by the largest daytime audience in television's history. Trendex surveys indicated that more than 50,000,000 people watched some part of what is surely not one of Shakespeare's better-known plays. Conservative estimates place the number of viewers who stayed with the intrigues of the last of the Plantagenets throughout the three plot-laden hours at 20,000,000 to 25,000,000. The reassuring success of the venture probably will encourage the network to offer more entertainment of this caliber. The excitement generated by its television debut may result in the film's being attended by more than the 20,000,000 Americans who saw Olivier's "Henry V" and "Hamlet."

Television is capable of contributing its share to the best in popular arts, as seen clearly in the Academy Award-winning motion picture "Marty," originally a television play. That its author, Paddy Chayevsky, should go from television to the legitimate theatre of New York, where his successful drama was staged by Joshua Logan, is but another example of the mobility of an artist who has something worthwhile to say.

To be sure, there is a great deal that is repetitious and patronizing in television, motion pictures, or any of our popular arts. Yet if we close our eyes to the significant contributions of the mass media, do we not encourage the very banality we purport to despise? For example, it is not difficult to look down our noses at the phenomenally successful *Life*, with its emphasis on photo-journalism. But not to take heed when *Life* presents a superb series, such as "The World We Live In," or when it gives its several million readers the initial publication of Hemingway's "Old Man and The Sea," is to invite the mass media to lose respect for the good things they themselves try to do.

To lionize Tennessee Williams when "The Rose Tattoo" is available to the relatively few who attend its stage presentations but ignore it when he writes the same story into a motion picture of rich comic force is to invite the cinema industry to cater to the lowest elements within itself rather than the best.

Does television narcotize the American public to the point where books are becoming cultural dodoes?

In 1955 youngsters set a record for borrowing books from public libraries, and much of this is due to their desire to delve more and more into literature dealing with exploration, general science, space travel, and life in other countries. Professor Robert Goldenson of Hunter College adds "the youngsters are often far ahead of many producers who think all that children want is blood and thunder." As a matter of fact, if every program of violence were taken off the air tomorrow, I doubt that there would be enough protest to give an advertising agency man a heartburn.

Certain critics of mass culture fear the influence of the majority taste on television offerings, since they believe the people invariably will choose the mediocre and the meretricious. If television (or the other media) provided only a diet of the tried and true stereotyped programs, that is, allowed the majority taste to mandate *every* choice, then I would agree with those who fear for the future. But the variety and quality of what is available to *national* audiences show this is not the case.

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Take for example the offerings of the television networks on Sunday, March 18, 1956, a Sunday which I chose at random. The viewer would have been able to see on this day a discussion of the times and works of Toulouse-Lautrec by noted critics ; an inspiring interview with Dr. Paul Tillich, the noted theologian ; a sensitive adaptation of Walter van Tilburg Clark's "Hook," a story of a hawk's life ; a powerful documentary on mental illness with Orson Welles and Dr. William Menninger ; an interview with the U.S. Secretary of Health, Welfare, and Education ; an interview with the Governor of Minnesota on the eve of the primary elections in his state ; an hour-and-a-half performance of "Taming of the Shrew" in color with Maurice Evans and Lilli Palmer.

While the above may not be of the same cultural status as the works of Kant or the music of Bartok, it is a pretty substantial diet, certainly not pap. Very well, the skeptic might say, so there are cultural programs available on Sunday. How do you know that people look at them ? This can be answered in two ways : (1) Most of these programs are in a series, some sponsored and others maintained year after year by the networks. If they were not being watched they would have been replaced. (2) This is not a fair question. Nobody can force anyone to watch anything that does not interest him except in a totalitarian state in which one watches or else ! The important thing is that the networks offer these programs for those who do wish to watch. It is not the network's or anyone else's duty to create the publics who will watch these programs.

To be sure, the editing and abridgment of Shakespeare's "Taming of the Shrew" to the hour-and-a-half period might be considered a watered version of the sacred text by some. But Shakespeare himself was a player who had as good an eye on the house as on posterity. The skillful elimination of some of the tedious subplots by Mr. Evans (surely one of the great modern interpreters of Shakespeare) not only increased the pace of the play but made it more understandable.

There are dedicated groups of people in the United States who instead of damning the media do something about improving what they dislike. Typical of such groups is the National Citizens' Committee for Educational Television, who have done more than talk about the level of American culture. It is significant to note that by the end of 1956 there will be 26 educational television stations on the air. The 18 stations now in operation are programming 340 hours weekly to a potential audience of 40,000,000. The new stations will bring an additional 7,000,000 viewers within the television orbit. According to a recent survey by the National Citizens' Committee for Educational Television, 57 per cent of the programs were live and locally produced, the remainder were kinescopes and film.

An outstanding example of an educational television station in operation is WQED in Pittsburgh, which is on the air sixty-seven and a-half hours a week. Recently one of its programs, the "Children's Corner," was signed for a three-year National Broadcasting contract. The commercial networks are watching the efforts of their educational confreres with more and more interest. It was also from WQED that Dr. Benjamin Spock, the well known children's specialist, went to a network show on the National Broadcasting Company. As educational television networks develop throughout the states there will be few communities in America where the audiences do not have their choice any evening between Berle or Bach, Godfrey or Goya, "The \$64,000 Question" or a discussion of Thucydides's historical method.

But to get back to books. As Clifton Fadiman pointed out recently, we are in the midst of a reprint revolution that may be the greatest boon since Gutenberg. This revolution, which started in 1939 when Pocket Books experimented with 25-cent reprints, saw 300,000,000 paperbound books printed in 1955. Since 1939 Americans have consumed about 2,000,000,000 copies.

The encouraging aspect of the paperbound books is that the quality of the titles is constantly improving. Whereas a few years ago the first association that came to one's mind was Mickey Spillane,

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today one thinks of the very successful Anchor books published by Doubleday, Harcourt Brace's Harvest books, Knopf's Vintage books, the Beacon Press paperbacks, Penguin books, to mention only a few. There appears to be a very substantial public for these modestly priced reprints of works by De Tocqueville, Ernest Cassirer, Stendhal. Take, for example, Saul Bellow's novel "Augie March." Although it won the National Book Award in 1954, its trade edition sold only a moderate number of copies. In its paperbound edition Bellow's novel has sold more than 1,000,000 copies.

One further area which should give us reason for optimism is serious music. In the special fiftieth anniversary edition of *Variety*, which might appear to some as a most unlikely publication to present facts and figures about serious art, Arthur Bronson has compiled some extremely significant data. In the 50-year period covered by *Variety's* life, serious musical expression has made extraordinary progress. Where in 1905 opera was the province of the few, today the listening audience of the Metropolitan Opera's Saturday afternoon broadcast alone is 15,000,000. To contrast with the half-dozen major symphony orchestras of a half-century ago, today we have 32 major American symphonies. Ballet, which virtually was unknown in the United States 50 years ago, now has three major American companies.

But what about the small cities? True, there may be four radio stations in Boston that broadcast a combined 30 to 35 hours *daily* of the finest classical music, but what about the hinterland? The answer to that is partly to be found in the fact that in 1940 there were 1,000 American towns offering concert series. Today there are some 2,500. As the sale of recordings of serious music by our symphony orchestras and noted artists has continued to grow, almost in direct correlation we have seen a growth in concert series.

Since 1920 more than 20,000,000 recordings of Arturo Toscanini alone have been sold, nor is it without significance that since 1903, when the first recordings were made of Mozart's work, more than 60,000,000 records of his music have been sold.

Where 1916 saw the renowned Diaghilev ballet with Nijinsky go to America and cost its backers about \$400,000, by 1954 the Sadler's Wells company of London arrived there and in 20 weeks of a national tour earned more than \$2,500,000. More noteworthy, perhaps, is that the National Broadcasting Company on December 12, 1955, presented the Sadler's Wells ballet with Margot Fonteyn in an hour-and-a-half performance of Tchaikovsky's "Sleeping Beauty." With the kind of courage that puts the lie to the adage that the giants of the mass media are afraid to challenge the stereotype of the "13-year-old mind," Producers' Showcase matched Fonteyn and company against Columbia Broadcasting Company's Burns and Allen, Arthur Godfrey, and "I Love Lucy" on the intensely competitive Monday night hours.

Millions of Americans were introduced to ballet for the first time that evening, but to me the significant factor is that they were provided with the opportunity to choose between Godfrey and the Sadler's Wells. If, as was the case, Godfrey's Talent Scouts program retained a higher audience rating, this is no cause to despair and decry the low tastes of the American people. Rather, such programs as "Richard III," the Sadler's Wells ballet, "Omnibus," and scores more give me confidence that the media, as they, too, grow in stature and understanding, will offer more and more substantial fare.

Perhaps it is an invidious comparison to point out that in 1955 about 35,000,000 people paid to attend classical music events as against the 15,000,000 who attended baseball games. But it is no *non sequitur* to note that the 1955 attendance at serious music events was about double that of 1940.

That the performance of symphonic music is not restricted to larger cities may be seen when in the last dozen years orchestras have sprung up in such places as Phoenix, Arizona; San Jose, California; Great Falls, Montana; and even the atomic town of Oak Ridge, Tennessee. The 200 symphony orchestras in the United States (80 percent more than 15 years ago and ten times as many as in the early 1920's) indicate a musical awareness such as we have never known.

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Surely no one will claim that all (if any) of our small-town symphonies have the musicianship of a Boston, Philadelphia, or St. Louis orchestra, but the members of these groups are donating their musical services free for the most part. In the city of Peoria, Illinois, for example, where I once lived, it was stimulating to be part of an orchestra where one colleague in the string section was a prominent attorney, another a chemistry professor, and perhaps a third the owner of a small but profitable dry-goods store. The strains of the Franck D minor were meaningful to each of the citizen-musicians.

Mass culture in the United States. If I have presented a hopeful picture of our future as we go into the era of extended leisure that Americans will share in the next decade or two, it is because I see substantial amelioration in the uses of our mass media. This growing explosion of creative enterprise in our popular arts cannot fail to enrich the lives of every one of us.



The University and a Free Society

E. D. DURYEA*

THERE is a saying that a fish decays first in the head and so does civilization. In 1950, the trustees of the Ford Foundation stressed the same idea from a different perspective. Their report read in part :

In times of uncertainty there is a tendency to resist change out of an illusion that free institutions are made more secure by an unchanging order. This, we believe, strikes at the very heart of democracy.

As the Ford Foundation report indicates, we live in a decade of uncertainty. We feel much more than our parents and grandparents ever did the pressures for and against social change. Because freedom of expression and of action get caught in the vortex of these pressures, the matter of social change is fundamental to a discussion of the university in a free society. Because the university — more than any other part of higher education — has an intimate connection with new knowledge and new ideas or insights, it has a most vital and distinctive function for the free society. Basic to this function, therefore, is the responsibility of the university for the long range interpretation of immediate events and the development of new knowledge and new understanding.

What I have to say rests upon three basic considerations :

1. That the American university is a unique institution in higher education particularly pertinent to the twentieth-century society.
2. That the American university has developed out of the same forces which have made this century distinctly different from the nineteenth century.

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3. That the American university has a distinctive responsibility to society to take the initiative in helping it adjust to a changing national and international environment — both human and natural.

What follows is a consideration of: the traditional concept of freedom in our society; the changes wrought by science and industrialism and their effects upon our concept of freedom and upon the growth of the university; the factors stemming from science and industrialism which tend to undermine freedom; and the responsibilities of the universities for a free society.

There is little doubt that the citizens of Athens in ancient Greece thought their society a free one. That the slaves had a different impression can hardly be denied. The extreme differences between free man and slave do not exist in twentieth-century United States, of course, but a great diversity of opinion does exist as to what constitutes the free society. Freedom, therefore, needs clarification at the start of this discussion. Also, it requires a basis common to at least the great majority of the citizens. Such a concept of freedom must grow out of the basic trends of our times. It must fit realistically the year 1956 in the United States. But consideration of it should include the traditional freedom of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century America and the two basic influences of modern times which have changed most drastically the whole texture of our society, namely, science and technical industry.

Freedom has many facets not the least of which are political freedom, freedom from insecurity, and freedom from want. The small businessman seeks freedom in fair-trade acts which prevent his larger competitors from underselling him; the housewife finds it in the weekly sales brought about by the competition of grocers. The farmers seek freedom from price depressions by price supports. The newspaper editor stands by his freedom to criticize the present administration. The average citizen finds it in the ballot, in the courts, and in the guarantees of the first ten amendments.

Freedom has an intangible quality about it, expressed well by the Negro ex-slave who was asked by a former master if he was as

well off as before. The ex-slave had to admit that his clothes were frayed, his roof leaked, and his food was not always available. "Wouldn't you rather be a slave again?" asked the master. "No," replied the ex-slave thoughtfully. "There's a sort of looseness about this here freedom that I likes."

Freedom has a relativeness about it that can confuse adherents of the American democratic system. On the one hand, our tradition has stressed the necessity of rule by law to prevent personal dictatorship. At the same time it has contained a strong flavor of what Roger N. Baldwin has called "the justifiable grounds of disobedience to the law."

Because of these differences and apparent contradictions, it behooves us to examine the elements of freedom basic to life in modern America.

In the American Revolution freedom's dominant theme undoubtedly was a political one. But the overtones of economics were unmistakable. Thus, the Declaration of Independence established our political rights against British authority, but the events which brought on the Declaration were entwined in the economics of New England merchants and Southern planters. They reflected opposition to taxes and commercial restrictions. Probably we can best summarize the original tradition in terms of John Locke's theory of the state as a compact among individuals and Adam Smith's thesis that man's economic relationships should be free to follow the natural law of supply and demand. To the average citizen these concepts fitted what Emerson called the fundamental moral law: a belief that fixed laws and eternal principles formed the basis of mankind's life and that the American Constitution and democratic system reflected these laws. The reflection was poor at first but was to become increasingly accurate as the laws became better known.

In its barest outline, therefore, freedom in the early nineteenth-century sense rested upon the rational individual persons as the basic, most important units in society and upon the government as a means to protect the political and personal security of these indivi-

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duals. For the predominantly agricultural, commercial culture of 1800, such a philosophy of individualism made good sense and served its participants well. But it took only the very beginnings of the modern industrial system to inject a modification in the form of a tariff to protect an infant industry from foreign competition. With that small start, the role of the state has shifted from *laissez faire* to economic regulation in proportion to the growth of the industrial system. That change has necessitated a re-evaluation of what is meant by the free society. It involves the history of the last hundred years.

The hundred years from 1850 to 1950 have been years of drastic change for this nation. The whole society has undergone a fundamental reorganization. Higher education has felt the change as have other societal institutions.

Since the Civil War, and especially since 1900, the pattern of American society has shifted from that of a primarily agrarian to an urban, industrial culture. A distinctive feature of this change is the importance of the material life, the stress upon the practical. From the age of the clipper ships to the establishment of great corporations, an economic frontier of commerce, business, and industry beckoned those with ability and desire and promised them power and prestige. A geographic frontier rapidly pushing west from the Alleghenies to the Pacific Ocean held out independence and a livelihood — and sometimes a fortune — for those able to master the obstacles of the material environment. The American spirit was pervaded with esteem for the mechanical accomplishments of living. We see it in long highways and thousand-mile railroads, great skyscrapers and bridges, and immense ranches and farms.

The vitality of this materialism started as the first settlers cleared the early wilderness. It grew with an increasing crescendo that blared at the turn of the last century and that now has been muted only by an increasing awareness of the importance of the cultural and social components of civilization.

The shift in the character of society from an agricultural to a machine culture became apparent during the 1890's at what Henry S. Commager calls the "watershed of American history."

As with all watersheds, the topography is blurred, but in the perspective of half a century the grand outlines emerge clearly. On the one side lies an America predominantly agricultural: concerned with domestic problems; conforming, intellectually at least, to the political, economic, and moral principles inherited from the 17th and 18th centuries. . . . On the other side lies the modern America, predominantly urban and industrial: inextricably involved in the world economy and politics; experiencing profound changes in population, social institutions, economy, and technology, and trying to accommodate its traditional institutions and habits of thought to conditions new and in part alien.

Higher education responded to the changing national order with dogged slowness, however. Its leaders and teachers resisted stubbornly the de-emphasis of the classical, humanistic tradition. But under the impact of the drastic social changes, they gave grudging recognition to the new kinds of study which were becoming a part of the curriculum of higher education. Engineering, agriculture, business administration, home economics, education, and, more recently, pharmacy and forestry assumed places of equal academic status with the traditional studies of the liberal arts, law, and medicine. Physics, biology, anthropology, psychology, and a throng of new subjects entered the curriculum. Much support for these newer studies came from the Land-Grant College Act of 1862 which provided federal lands to support institutions offering practical studies in agriculture and the "mechanic arts" in addition to the established curriculum.

The original institutions of higher education, the liberal arts colleges, derived their traditions from English influences. They offered a fixed, humanistic curriculum, stressing the classics and a few historical and rudimentary scientific courses. In contrast, the American universities have developed from predominantly European — especially German — influences. They also have grown to

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implement the new industrialism by means of programs emphasizing science and technology. Since the middle of the nineteenth century, they have taken the initiative for the leadership of higher education from the colleges. In effect, the culture of our nation provided the soil into which the roots of German traditions were transplanted. The resulting growth has been that of a uniquely American institution — as different from its European predecessors as from the early American colleges.

The enterprise of scientific research and teaching came to American higher education with the nearly fourteen thousand Americans who returned from study in the German universities during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Many rose to influential positions in higher education and sought to change its character, amplifying the limited four-year curriculum with graduate and specialized study in the German tradition.

By 1900 they had succeeded. The first truly American university, Johns Hopkins, opened in 1876 with a program stressing graduate study and science and the first American faculty chosen for its research promise and encouraged to scientific experimentation and publication. Its achievements gained Johns Hopkins renown as the leading graduate center of its day and set a pattern which was quickly followed by Harvard, Chicago, Michigan, and other now-recognized, leading universities.

Under its ample roof, this new American university, therefore, has taken in esoteric research and graduate teaching on one hand and practical subjects such as industrial arts and agriculture on the other. It has reflected the whole range of endeavor in the society it serves. It has given this nation the vital blood stream of research and teaching so essential to the modern technology, provided trained workers and leaders for a tremendously expanding industrial system, and fostered the growth of the traditional studies stemming from the liberal arts programs of the early colleges.

Fundamentally, what the American university has done is to provide the intellectual leadership for the changes which brought

about our present industrial-economic system. From the universities have come not only the trained personnel and potential leadership but, to a large degree, the new ideas and knowledge which have helped us achieve our modern eminence as the world's leading nation.

Unfortunately, as is well recognized, this leadership has been most influential in the material aspects of living. Our achievements in the areas of social adjustment to technological changes have been limited. This results obviously from the more strongly entrenched opposition to social changes. But it does point up the fact that leadership by universities has a broad scope. And the implementation of the leadership for social change has an intimate connection with freedom.

The growth of modern industrial America — strongly technological and scientific — raises for us a very basic question. In the words of Sidney Hook, "Shall our corporate economy — indeed, can our corporate economy — function within a democratic framework of control, or does its logic of production require some authoritarian cultural order to supervene upon what we have known until now? Shall the end of the free market, as Horace M. Kallen searchingly asks, spell the end of the free market in ideas?" We must contend that it does not, of course; and in meeting these threats, the university — because of its unique function of supplying new knowledge and understanding — has a great responsibility.

The complexities of an examination of these basic issues present a bewildering confusion to persons who have not devoted time and effort to a thorough study of them. We certainly can hardly expect to cover the subject here. We lack time to delve into the limitations of the classical economic theory, the ramifications of social legislation, the organization and power of large industrial corporations and labor unions, the effects of mass propaganda and communication, and the many other factors which form the components of twentieth-century America. Careful analysis of the pattern, however, does reveal certain configurations which can provide a sound basis for judgments. Two such configurations which have pertinence to freedom and

higher education are described by two terms. One might be called either concentration or centralization. The other is standardization. These two designate pervading characteristics of the growth of the present order.

In society, the centralization inherent in the changes of the last one hundred years shows up statistically in all areas of national life. Modern corporations such as the telephone company, the great automobile manufacturing concerns, huge steel companies, and the entire development of our industrial system offer abundant proof. In 1940, for example, there were 30 billion-dollar corporations. In the 1930's, of all corporations reporting, only one-tenth of one percent of them owned 52 percent of the assets of all of them. Two large unions, now united, dominate American labor. Large cities such as New York, Detroit, Philadelphia, and Chicago contain huge concentrations of population and wealth. Cooperative marketing organizations unify the farmers of the nation. The statistics are plentiful. The facts of concentration and centralization are clear in government, in labor, in business and industry, in agriculture, in urban centers, and in all phases of American life.

The evidence of standardization is equally clear. Mass-produced automobiles, machine parts, brand foods, commercial recreation, and all of the countless examples offer evidence. The cheapness and plenty of mass production have tended to pattern our entire living. Newspapers, magazines, and radio stations show overwhelming evidence of the same mass production in our mental fare.

The effects of these two tendencies endanger freedom. Centralization of control and concentration of power make possible the direction of our entire society by a very few individuals. They give real meaning to the comment of J. P. Morgan during the 1912 Pujo investigation that he liked "a little competition, but . . . combination better. Without control you cannot do a thing." It makes clear the significance of the analysis by Professor Clair Wilcox in the *Harvard Business Review* that we face today "a struggle between functional groups possessing concentrated power — a struggle to

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control the products of industry" by Big Labor, Big Agriculture, Big Little Business, and Big Big Business. It is epitomized by the hypothetical problem of a liberal third party seeking the financial support necessary to carry on effectively a presidential campaign.

Standardization of thought by means of mass communication in press, journals, radio, and television makes divergent opinion less influential. It places increasing pressure on all to agree with those who control these means of communication.

Such analysis does not deny that both centralization and standardization have meant better living and more power to the nation. To fight these two tendencies is to oppose the flooding tide. To deny their benefits is to deny man's greatest gains in his age-old fight to control his environment. But to recognize their dangers is only wise and certainly essential for freedom. Also, because the age producing these tendencies has produced our universities, and because the universities today set the pattern for all higher education, those serving in and interested in universities have a special responsibility for recognizing the danger and taking steps to meet it.

The basic question is whether freedom in terms of its traditional American meaning can survive in this country. This, in turn, obligates us to re-examine both what we mean by freedom and how we can act to protect and enhance it.

In conclusion, therefore, we will consider free society in terms of these forces and consider the essential functions of universities in maintaining a free society.

First, let us summarize the foregoing development. To begin with, we have interpreted the traditional American concept of freedom as one having a strong flavor of individualism. Freedom and individual rights — politically and economically — have come together in this country. The society of the free individual took shape in a predominantly agrarian culture. Forces operating during the past century have built instead a culture dominated by technology and industry. We have shown that the university is a product of these

same forces and intimately connected with their influences. Finally, we have warned of the two basic dangers of the new society, namely, centralization and standardization. Our problem now is to evaluate these components of the present situation to give direction to our thinking and action.

What is freedom in modern society? Is it a completely individual-centered situation — with each of us free to do what we want over and above the basic necessities of civil administration? Or has the new era brought on complications which antiquate the traditional concept of the free society? As in most cases involving human relations, the answer undoubtedly lies between these two extremes. In the political sphere it would deny the facts to say, as John Locke did, that society is simply a compact of individuals. The very elements of centralization and standardization have increased tremendously the activities of government and large power groups in industry, commerce, labor, agriculture, and other phases of our modern life as forces encroaching upon individual freedom. On the economic side completely free competition does not exist. Adam Smith's belief in the enlightened self-interest of the capitalists fell in this nation during the reign of the nineteenth-century economic barons. We do have, and probably will have, more of those provisions for security which protect individuals from the effects of unemployment, old age, and other dislocations aggravated by mass production. In their book *The Modern Corporation and Private Property*, A. A. Berle, Jr., and G. C. Means confirm the significance of this change.

To Adam Smith [they write] private enterprise meant an individual or a few partners actively engaged and relying in large part on their own labor or their immediate direction. Today we have tens and hundreds of thousands of owners, of workers, and of consumers combined in single enterprises. These great associations are so different from the small, privately owned enterprises of the past as to make the concept of private enterprise an ineffective instrument of analysis. . . .

As private enterprise disappears with increasing size so also does individual initiative. The idea that an army operates on the basis of "rugged individualism" would be ludicrous. Equally so is the same

idea with respect to the modern corporation. Group activity, the co-ordinating of the different steps in production, the extreme division of labor in large scale enterprise necessarily imply not individualism but co-operation and the acceptance of authority almost to the point of autocracy. Only to the extent that any worker seeks advancement within an organization is there room for individual initiative — an initiative which can be exercised only within the narrow range of function he is called upon to perform. At the very pinnacle of the hierarchy of organization in a great corporation, there, alone, can individual initiative have a measure of free play. . . .

Likewise, our lives in all the routine of living have undergone drastic changes. We live too much like our neighbors — both next door and across the nation — to say that standardization has not affected each of us. For the good of an improved standard of living, of personal and national security, we have paid the price of loss of personal independence.

This does not mean that we must eliminate the traditional concepts of freedom. The basic element of Locke's theory of political freedom was that the state should serve rather than master the people ; of the theory of private enterprise, that society should benefit from the force of individual initiative. The problem of retaining these two elements in the face of modern trends undoubtedly has expression in the familiar phrase "freedom versus security." The power of the state will have to be controlled ; yet the individual's economic security protected. Individual initiative must remain a vital force ; yet persons with the desire to work should not lose this privilege because of the functioning of a complex industrial economy.

These obviously are the most pressing problems of our age. The answers will not come easily or swiftly. But they will come out of a basic point of view prevalent in the nation. Our successful achievement of retaining freedom in the modern world rests upon the determination of us all to hold a positive, constructive, and democratic point of view rather than a negative, disillusioned one. We need to continue the basic principle of our democratic way of life, namely, that the people will retain control. At the same time, as

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great a number of people as possible should share in the benefits of our culture. This principle, in turn, depends upon a recognition of the value of gradual change to correct the ills of the present order and meet the conditions of shifting human and natural environment.

To this end, all higher education has an important role. By means of low tuition and financial aid, youth with ability find avenues to better their positions in life. Technical, scientific, and professional programs provide the nation with a trained, competent leadership. General and adult education broaden the understanding of democracy and the problems of our age so that we may have a more enlightened citizenry. The growing junior and community college movement spreads the benefits of higher education to an impressively increasing number of people.

To the same end, the university serves a purpose far less publicly recognized. The traditional political and economic freedoms of the nation have rested upon an assumption of free intercourse in the expression of political parties and the commerce of business and industry. For education, free intercourse has been in the form of a flow of ideas. The freedom of the individual to investigate those subjects for which his training has prepared him and to communicate his findings to colleagues, students, and the public have implemented this intercourse. From it have come many great and wonderful things such as protection from disease, atomic energy, jet propulsion, new farm crops and increased yield from our land, and an almost unlimited variety of contributions to human welfare.

Through its traditional concern with research and scholarship in the advanced areas of all disciplines, from the humanities to science and technology, the university has a major share of the responsibility to preserve and enhance this freedom for intercourse in ideas. Stated differently, the university has a special function: to interpret immediate events in terms of their long-range implications and to find new knowledge and relationships. By performing this office the university implements the belief that democracy's strength lies in gradual change.

Our concluding consideration, therefore, concerns the preservation of this function against the pressures inherent in centralized control and standardized living.

Certainly, one factor stands out clearly. The public at large needs to understand better the essentialness of this function to its own welfare. The task of gaining such understanding and support forms the most urgent but least recognized mission of leaders in higher education today.

More fundamental than the effort to gain support is the need for an underlying point of view. For this, I would like to suggest a basic principle which, if applied in all activities related to the university, can guide our decisions and policies: *the principle of diversity*.

The effects of diversity oppose the effects of both centralization and standardization. For education, diversity means the offering of as many different points of view as practically possible. Each point of view would be expressed by scholars who believe and fully understand it rather than all points of view being expressed by one scholar. It means also a diversification of control and administration so that institutions may have freedom to offer different educational emphases. Diversity means differences.

In the organization of higher education, an extreme example of the logical outcome of centralization and standardization might be the direction of all publicly supported institutions by one federal office or agency. By controlling curricular plans and faculty personnel for all institutions, such an agency would ensure the graduation of students prepared to fit in each phase of our economic life. The efficient organization and the elimination of costs would be impressive. In the process, however, not only individuality but the production of new ideas would suffer. The national society could be stereotyped into a system which would fit only existing conditions well; thus inelastic it would fail as a changing world cracked its hardened veneer.

The comparison of such a federal system to existing state systems makes clear the danger of centralization. Diversity implies a limited

centralized control. In a tangible sense, diversity can be achieved by a coordination of state universities in their general programs, but with a decentralization of immediate control. Separate boards is one suggestion. Several moderately sized institutions in place of one tremendous university is another. Certainly, strong faculty organizations help bring a diversity of pressure to the administration of higher education.

For staff and curriculum, centralization of control and standardization of thought aid efforts by those in power to prevent consideration of ideas not in line with their interests. Under a policy of diversity, great effort would be made to ensure that different theories were represented in the disciplines in which fundamental differences exist. In economics, for example, scholars who teach from a Keynesian point of view should be joined with those holding a more classical economics emphasis. In psychology it would be unwise to have only faculty members who tend to stress heredity to the exclusion of environment in explaining intelligence. The outstanding example of a lack of diversity occurred in Russia when a political consideration required scientific conformity to the new and relatively untested Lysenko theory in genetics.

In the realm of ideas, the need for diversity as a basis for ensuring the unique university function of leadership in a changing world has its greatest pertinence. Faculty members need to examine constantly all phases of mankind's activities and knowledge and to give the benefit of their findings to society. To do this effectively requires different ideas. It requires an open-mindedness to all theories — whether they deal with controversial interpretations of nature and nurture or with a Machiavellian suggestion of the inevitability of rule by an oligarchy — provided each proponent communicates on a subject pertinent to his professional preparation. Diversity means the representation of different points of view — as far as is practical — in each of the disciplines where basic differences exist.

Such a policy of diversity recognizes that we do not know definitely the correct solutions for the problems of mankind and,

therefore, we consider various proposals by those who can comment intelligently.

While assuring diversity of opinion, however, faculty members have a responsibility to make all knowledge understandable in its broader implications. With such understanding, the people in this country and in other countries of the world can better know how the human and natural orders operate — how individuals and separate elements can cooperate and do interrelate.

In this sense, protection of freedom rests not only upon a diversity of opinion but also upon a definite effort by those who enjoy this diversity to give all people a better understanding of what we call mankind's knowledge. If each faculty member teaches not only the techniques and facts of his discipline but also the broad concepts giving insight into and meaning to the techniques and facts as well, the universities will implement a positive program for freedom. Freedom and democracy rest upon intelligence and order. Intelligence means understanding the functioning of the order of the world and universe. If each faculty member and administrator recognizes this most basic situation and works sincerely to develop it, each will contribute heavily to the cause of a free society.

This positive effort, combined with a recognition of the need for diversity of opinion, comprises the real and unique function of the university in a free society.

A Writer's Declaration

WILLIAM SAROYAN*

ON October 15, 1934, my first book, *The Daring Young Man on the Flying Trapeze and Other Stories*, was published. The year 1934 seems quite near, but the fact remains that it was twenty years ago, as I write. Many things happened in those twenty years, several of them to me.

I didn't earn one dollar by any means other than writing. I wrote short stories, plays, novels, essays, poems, book reviews, miscellaneous comment, letters to editors, private letters, and songs.

Nothing that I wrote was written to order, on assignment, or for money, although a good deal of what I wrote happened to earn money. If an editor liked a story as I had written it, he could buy it. If he wanted parts of it written over, I did not do that work. Nobody did it. One editor took liberties with a short piece about Christmas, and the writer of a cook book to which I had written a free Preface added a few lines by way of making me out a soldier-patriot. I protested to the editor and to the writer of the cook book, but of course the damage had been done. During the Second World War I wrote no propaganda of any kind, although I was invited several times to do so. The point is that for twenty years I have been an American writer who has been entirely free and independent.

I consider the past twenty years the first half of my life as a published writer, and the next twenty I consider the second half. At that time I shall be sixty-six years old, which can be very old, or not. I expect to be more creative in the next twenty years than I was in the first twenty, even though I start with a number of handicaps.

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To begin with, I owe so much in back taxes that it is very nearly impossible arithmetically to even the score by writing, and I have acquired other personal, moral, and financial responsibilities.

I have never been subsidized, I have never accepted money connected with a literary prize or award, I have never been endowed, and I have never received a grant or fellowship. A year or two after my first book was published I was urged by friends to file an application for a Guggenheim Fellowship. Against my better judgment I filed an application, which was necessarily if not deliberately haphazard. How should I know what I wanted to write, for instance? I couldn't possibly describe it. My application was turned down and I began to breathe freely again.

I am head over heels in debt. I expect to get out of debt by writing, or not at all. I have no savings account, no stocks or bonds, no real estate, no insurance, no cash, and no real property that is convertible into anything like a sum of money that might be useful. I simply have got to hustle for a living. I mention these matters impersonally, as facts, and not to arouse sympathy. I don't want any.

Had my nature been practical I might at this time know financial security, as it's called. There is nothing wrong with such security, I suppose, but I prefer another kind. I prefer to recognize the truth that I *must* work, and to believe that I *can*.

I squandered a great deal of money that I earned as a writer and I lost a lot of it gambling. It seems to have been my nature to squander and to gamble, that's all. I gave some away, perhaps a great deal. I am not unaware of the possible meaning of the discomfort I have felt when I have had money, and the compulsion I have had to get rid of it somehow or other. I think I have felt the need to be only a writer, a writing writer, and not a success of any kind.

The ability or compulsion to hoard money has always seemed to me a complicated if not offensive thing. And yet I have always had sympathy for those who have been experts at hoarding, at legal

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means by which not to pay taxes, at timely thrusts into new and profitable areas of money-making, such as investments, real estate, inventions, oil, uranium, government contracts, the backing of plays, manufacturing, and marketing. The noticeable shrewdness of such people has always amused me, even when I myself have been the party to be outwitted.

When I was in the Army, for instance, in the snow of Ohio, in the dead of winter, a very capable money-man who was quite rich and young and not in the Army flew from New York to Ohio to discuss with me changes he felt I ought to make in one of my plays on which he had paid me a thousand dollars in advance. I met him whenever the Army regulations permitted me to, and I heard him out, which took a great deal of time I would have preferred to keep to myself. The man talked around and around, and it suddenly occurred to me that what he was really trying to say but couldn't was that he didn't feel the play would be a hit, and that he was helpless not to do something about the thousand dollars. This did not astonish me. I took a check for a thousand dollars to his hotel and left it at the desk, along with a short note. I wanted to see if my hunch was right. It was. We were supposed to meet the following night. We didn't. He flew back to New York with the check, cashed it, and I never heard from him again. There was no legal, or even moral, reason for me to return the thousand dollars. I simply couldn't bear to see him so upset about the small sum of money, all the while pretending that he was concerned only about art.

At one of the biggest moving-picture factories in Hollywood, when I discovered that I had been hoodwinked into making a poor deal, I met the executives who had done the brilliant hoodwinking, I established that they *had* done it, and I got into my car and drove to San Francisco. I was informed several years later that I had left behind wages due me under the terms of the hoodwinking agreement that amounted to something between five and fifteen thousand dollars. I never investigated the matter. The factory and its chief beneficiaries were hoarding profits by the millions, working diligently

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and profitably with the government on shabby propaganda films, and yet six or seven of the executives found it absolutely necessary to act in unison and to outwit the writer of a story they wanted desperately, from which they acquired three or four more millions of dollars. I have no idea what they have done with their money, but I am sure it has been something cautious and useless.

Before my first book was published I was not a drinker, but soon after it came out I discovered the wisdom of drinking, and I think this is something worth looking into for a moment.

In 1935 I drank moderately, and traveled to Europe for the first time, but the following nine years, until I was drafted into the Army, I drank as much as I liked, and I frequently drank steadily for nine or ten hours at a time.

I was seldom drunk, however. I enjoyed the fun of drinking and talking loudly with friends — writers, painters, sculptors, newspapermen, and the girls and women we knew in San Francisco.

Drinking with good companions can be a good thing for a writer, but let a writer heed this humble and perhaps unnecessary warning : stop drinking when drinking tends to be an end in itself, for that is a useless end. I believe I have learned a lot while I have been drinking with friends, just as most of us may say we have learned a lot in sleep. There is, however, a recognizable limit to what may be learned by means of drinking.

In the writing that I have done during the past twenty years, what do I regret ?

Nothing. Not one word.

Did I write enough ?

No. No writer ever writes enough.

Might I have written differently ? More intelligently, for instance ?

No.

First, I always tried my best, as I understand trying. Second, I believe I was quite intelligent all the time.

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Then, what about the theory of certain critics and readers that my writing is unrealistic and sentimental?

Well, I think they are mistaken. In writing that is *effective* I don't think *anything* is unrealistic. As for my own writing, I think it has always been profoundly realistic if not ever superficially so. I don't think my writing is sentimental either. Although it is a very sentimental thing to be a human being.

As I write, I am back in San Francisco, where I lived when my first book was published, where I have not lived in six or seven years, and the day is the thirteenth of October. I drove up from Malibu two days ago for a visit of ten or eleven days while my house on the beach is being painted inside and out. I did not drive to San Francisco in order to be here on the twentieth anniversary of the publication of my first book, but I shall be here on that day nevertheless.

Already I have walked in the various neighborhoods of San Francisco I have known, to notice again the various houses in which I have lived: 348 Carl Street, 1707 Divisadero, 2378 Sutter, 123 Natoma: and the various places in which I worked before I had had a story published in a national magazine: various branch offices of the Postal Telegraph Company — on Market Street in the Palace Hotel Building, on Powell Street at Market, on Taylor at Market in the Golden Gate Theatre Building, and at 405 Brannan, near Third.

I was a clerk and teletype operator in the first three offices, but I was the manager of the office on Brannan. I have always been a little proud of that, for I was the youngest manager of a Postal Telegraph branch office in America, nineteen years old and without a high school diploma.

Yesterday I walked through the Crystal Palace Market and visited the stand at which I once hustled potatoes and tomatoes, the *Fiore d'Italia*.

I went into the building at Market and Sixth where the offices of the Cypress Lawn Cemetery Company are located. I worked there, too.

The vice-president said, "Do you intend to make Cypress Lawn your lifetime career?"

I said, "Yes, sir."

I got the job.

I quit a month later, but working there was a valuable experience. I remember the arrival of Christmas week and the vice-president's bitter complaint that owing to the absence of an epidemic of influenza the company's volume of business for December over the previous year had fallen twenty-two per cent.

I remarked, "But everybody will catch up eventually, won't they?"

The vice-president lifted his glasses from the bridge of his nose to his forehead in order to have another look at me.

"I'm a writer," I said. "Unpublished."

He asked me to look at some slogans he had composed for the company: *Inter here. A lot for your money.*

I said he had a flair.

I walked along the Embarcadero to the Dodd Warehouse, across from Pier 17, for I worked there a month, too. The trouble with that job was the floating crap games of the longshoremen every lunch hour in empty boxcars or behind piles of lumber on the docks. My take-home pay every week was nothing, although I made a friend of the great Negro craps shooter and game manager who was called Doughbelly. The sunlight down there on the waterfront during those lunch-hour crap games was wonderful, and as I walked there yesterday I could almost see the huge old man calling the points of the game, and I had to remember that whenever he noticed I wasn't betting he correctly surmised that I was fresh out of funds and slipped me a silver dollar or two so that I might get back into the action.

Once, when I stayed away from the games for three days running in the hope of having a few dollars in my pocket for Saturday

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night, Doughbelly kept asking everybody, "Where's that Abyssinian boy?"

I was in the Dodd Warehouse eating sandwiches and reading Jack London, that's where I was.

It was at 348 Carl Street twenty years ago on this day, October 13, that I opened a package from Random House and saw a copy of my first book. That was a hell of a moment. I was so excited I couldn't roll a Bull Durham cigarette. After three tries I finally made it, and began to inhale and exhale a little madly as I examined the preposterous and very nearly unbelievable object of art and merchandise. What a book, what a cover, what a title page, what words, what a photograph—now just watch the women swarm around. For a young writer *does* write in order to expect pretty women to swarm around.

Alas, the swarmers aren't often pretty. This is a mystery that continues to baffle me. Pretty women swarm around fat little men who own and operate small businesses. They swarm around chiropractors who are full of talk about some of their interesting cases and achievements. They swarm around young men who wear black shirts and have five buttons on the sleeves of their sport coats, who have no visible means of support, who spend hours chatting amiably about last night's preposterous trivia as if it were history.

Pretty women swarm around everybody but writers.

Plain, intelligent women *somewhat* swarm around writers.

But it wasn't only to have pretty women swarm around that I hustled my first book into print. It wasn't that alone by a long shot.

I also meant to revolutionize American writing.

In the early thirties the word revolutionize enjoyed popularity and was altogether respectable, but a special poll invented by a special statistician would be the only means today by which to measure my success in revolutionizing American writing. To pretend that my writing hasn't had any effect at all on American writing, however, would be inaccurate. The trouble is that for the most part my writing influenced unpublished writers who remained unpublished, and to measure that kind of an influence calls for a lot of imagination and

daring. The good writers that my writing influenced were already published, some of them long published, but the truth is that my writing *did* influence their writing, too, for I began to notice the improvement almost immediately. And I didn't notice it in short stories alone, I noticed it in novels and plays, and even in movies.

What did my writing have that might be useful to writing in general?

Freedom.

I think I demonstrated that if you have a writer, you have writing, and that the writer himself is of greater importance than his writing — until he quits, or is dead.

Thus, if you *are* a writer, you do not have to kill yourself every time you write a story, a play, or a novel.

But why did I want to revolutionize American writing?

I had to, because I didn't like it, and wanted to.

And why, as a writer, was I unwilling to act solemn? Didn't I know that unless I acted solemn the big critics would be afraid to write about my writing? I knew. I refused to act solemn because I didn't feel solemn. I didn't feel I *ought* to feel solemn, or even dignified, because I knew acting dignified was only a shadow removed from being pompous. Some writers are naturally solemn, dignified, or pompous, but that doesn't mean that they are also naturally great, or even effective.

There simply isn't any mysterious connection between solemnity and great writing. Some great writers had great solemnity, but most of them had almost none. They had something else.

What is this other thing?

I think it is an obsession to get to the probable truth about man, nature, and art, straight through everything to the very core of *one's own* being.

What is this probable truth?

It changes from day to day, certainly from year to year. You can measure the change from decade to decade, and the reason you

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can measure it is that there have been writers (and others) who have been obsessed about it, too.

To become free is the compulsion of our time — free of everything that is useless and false, however deeply established in man's fable. But this hope of freedom, this need of it, does not for a moment mean that man is to go berserk. Quite the contrary, since freedom, real freedom, true freedom, carries the life and fable of man nearer and nearer to order, beauty, grace, and meaning — all of which must always remain correctable in details — revised, improved, refined, enlarged, extended.

Intelligence *is* arriving into the fable of the life of man. It isn't necessarily welcome, though, certainly not in most quarters. In order to be a little less unwelcome it must be joined by humor, out of which the temporary best has always come. You simply cannot call the human race a dirty name unless you smile when you do so. The calling of the name may be necessary and the name itself may be temporarily accurate, but not to smile at the time is a blunder that nullifies usefulness, for without humor there is no hope, and man could no more live without hope than he could without the earth underfoot.

Life rules the world, impersonal and free life. The anonymous living tell their story every day, with the help of professional or amateur writers, but the greatest story-teller of all is time and change, or death. But death is not our doom and not our enemy. Next to birth it is our best gift, and next to truth it is our best friend.

I am back in San Francisco on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the publication of my first book — the beginning of my life as a writer, as a force in the life of my time, as a voting representative of my anonymous self and of any and all others whose aspirations parallel my own — to live creatively, to live honorably, to hurt no one insofar as possible, to enjoy mortality, to fear neither death nor immortality, to cherish fools and failures even more than wise men and saints since there are more of them, to believe, to hope, to work, and to do these things with humor.

To say yes, and not to say no.

What advice have I for the potential writer?

I have none, for anybody is a potential writer, and the writer who *is* a writer needs no advice and seeks none.

What about courses in writing in colleges and universities?

Useless, they are entirely useless.

The writer is a spiritual anarchist, as in the depth of his soul every man is. He is discontented with everything and everybody. The writer is everybody's best friend and only true enemy — the good and great enemy. He neither walks with the multitude nor cheers with them. The writer who is a writer is a rebel who never stops. He does not conform for the simple reason that there is nothing yet worth conforming to. When there is something half worth conforming to he will not conform to that, either, or half conform to it. He won't even rest or sleep as other people rest and sleep. When he's dead he'll probably be dead as others are dead, but while he is alive he is alive as no one else is, not even another writer. The writer who is a writer is also a fool. He is the easiest man in the world to belittle, ridicule, dismiss, and scorn: and that also is precisely as it should be. He is also mad, measurably so, but saner than all others, with the best sanity, the only sanity worth bothering about — the living, creative, vulnerable, valorous, unintimidated, and arrogant sanity of a free man.

I am a writer who is a writer, as I have been for twenty years, and expect to be for twenty more.

I am here to stay, and so is everybody else. No explosive is going to be employed by anybody on anybody. Knowing this, believing this, the writer who is a writer makes plans to watch his health casually, and to write his writing with more and more purposeful intelligence, humor, and love.

I am proud of my twenty years, undecorated as they may be. I am proud to be a writer, the writer I am, and I don't care what anybody else is proud of.

The Air We Explore

LEONARD ENGEL*

MOST of us ordinarily take the vast sea of air around and above us for granted. The earth's atmosphere, however, out to the wildest black yonder is in the news. Soviet and American high-altitude sounding balloons have been making scientific headlines. Only a few thousand working hours from now, the first man-made moon will be hurled into space.

In 1714 the great astronomer Edmund Halley — discoverer of Halley's comet — could assert that the essential particulars of the atmosphere were "perfectly well understood." In the light of the laws of natural science as then known, he was right.

Halley could not know that radio, rockets and Geiger counters were to reveal an immensely deeper, more complex and more mysterious atmosphere than he dreamed. He thought earth's blanket of air was 45 miles thick. We know it extends at least 10,000 miles upward from the surface of the earth. He thought the atmosphere had a very simple structure: the density of the air merely diminished gradually as one went up until the air merged into the nothingness of space. He had no idea of the atmosphere's intricate, layered construction, or of the strange things that go on in some parts of it.

The atmosphere forms a quadruple shell around the earth. The bottom-most layer is the troposphere, the layer of dense air in whose depths we live, ten miles thick at the equator, five miles thick at the poles. Next comes the stratosphere. The latter rises upward from the top of the troposphere to a height of about 50 miles.

Above the stratosphere is the third layer, the ionosphere. The ionosphere extends outward several hundred miles to the fourth

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and topmost atmospheric layer. This, the exosphere, is the layer in which the atmosphere does become indistinguishable from inter-planetary space. The exosphere may go as far as 18,000 miles out.

Let us take up separately the four layers of the air, and what is known about each.

The troposphere represents less than one twenty-fifth of one per cent of the total volume of the atmosphere, but contains nearly 80 per cent of its gases. The air is dense enough to support life, however, only in the lower reaches of the troposphere. Supplementary oxygen is desirable for persons flying in unpressurized planes above 10,000 to 12,000 feet, and mandatory at 15,000 feet or more. The men who climbed Mount Everest, whose peak is well within the troposphere, had to carry oxygen with them, in tanks on their backs.

The word troposphere means turbulent sphere, and it is that. Hurricanes, tornadoes and the other great storms that buffet the surface of the earth are centered in the troposphere.

By all odds, the most interesting recent discovery in the troposphere is the "jet stream," a river of wind circling the earth. In the northern hemisphere, the jet stream blows the year around from west to east at an altitude of 15,000 to 40,000 feet and a speed of 50 to 300 miles an hour.

The jet stream is obviously a product of the general circulation of the air around the world and has much to do with our weather, but its exact mechanics are unknown. The jet stream was uncovered with the aid of weather balloons.

In the troposphere, the sky is blue by day because of the scattering of sunlight by dust particles and the like. In the stratosphere, the air is clear. There are no clouds, except some ice-crystal clouds (13 to 18 miles up) and a rare form of dust cloud occasionally found 50 miles up. The stratosphere sky (as all the sky above that) is therefore brownish black. The stars may be seen by day. The sun has a fierce metallic glare and its flaming corona — visible from the surface of the earth only during eclipses — is constantly in evidence.

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The stratosphere contains 20 per cent of the atmospheric gases, though it constitutes less than one-fifth of one per cent of the total volume of the atmosphere. Men have penetrated into the lower portion of the stratosphere both in planes and in balloons. But unmanned balloons have gone higher. The record for an unmanned balloon is 140,000 feet — $26\frac{1}{2}$ miles above the earth, or almost 20 miles into the stratosphere.

Down where we live, near sea level, virtually all the air's life-giving oxygen is in the form of "molecular oxygen"—two atoms of oxygen joined in a single molecule. As one rises, another form of oxygen, ozone, containing three atoms of oxygen per molecule, appears. The concentration of ozone reaches a peak in the "ozone layer" of the lower stratosphere, at a height of 20 to 40 miles.

The ozone layer absorbs a major part of the ultraviolet light from the sun. Because present forms of life on the earth's surface (including man) could not survive exposure to the full ultraviolet radiation of the sun, it often is said that the ozone layer is essential to life. This is true only for life on land (ultraviolet light does not penetrate the sea) and only for life as we know it. Had there been no ozone layer, other forms of life, resistant to ultraviolet light, might well have evolved.

Now we come to the eerie, turbulent world of the ionosphere — primary target of the fantastic earth satellite project. Man has as yet hardly penetrated the ionosphere. In 1949, the U.S. Army mounted a WAC Corporal rocket in the nose of a V-2, took the WAC Corporal off the ground with the V-2, and launched the lighter rocket from high over the White Sands Proving Grounds in New Mexico. It reached an altitude of 250 miles. But most rockets go only 100 miles or so up. Radio studies and other indirect means have been the source of most of what has been learned about the ionosphere up to now.

The ionosphere is exposed to the practically undiluted radiation of the sun — visible light, ultraviolet rays, X-rays, infrared radiation, streams of hydrogen particles. Cosmic rays from we know not where, beat upon the ionosphere and smash into occasional air atoms,

causing "cosmic ray showers" (flying debris of the tiny terrible atomic explosions). Meteors (mostly dust particles the size of a pinhead, but sometimes much larger) rush in from interplanetary space.

The air in the ionosphere is 10,000,000 times rarer than air at sea level; the ionosphere is almost as empty as the "empty space" produced by the newest and the very best vacuum pumps. Thin as it is, the air in the ionosphere is too thick for meteors. Virtually all are consumed in the lower part of the ionosphere — a region astronomers have named the "crematorium of meteors" — by heat generated by the friction of their passage through the air.

In the stratosphere, the main constituents of the air — oxygen and nitrogen — are the same (except for the modest percentage of ozone in the ozone layer) as at sea level. Two changes take place in the composition of the air, however, as we enter the ionosphere. First, oxygen molecules begin to break up into separate atoms of oxygen. Second, solar radiation electrifies some of the oxygen atoms and some of the oxygen and nitrogen molecules, converting them into what the physicist terms ions.

The over-all proportion of ions is certainly small, but their effects are enormous; the region is well named the sphere of the ion. To begin with, the ionosphere's ions make worldwide radio possible and, at the same time, are responsible for some of radio's worst problems.

The ions are concentrated mainly in three layers. The lowest, located just above the start of the ionosphere, is the D layer. Thirty miles farther up (80 miles from the earth's surface) is the E layer. Another 20 miles up is the F layer, a broad band which is actually two layers by day and one layer at night.

The E and F layers reflect radio waves of the wave lengths used in regular broadcasting and in commercial shortwave and send them back to earth. That is why radio can reach long distances around the curvature of the globe.

The D layer, on the other hand, absorbs radio waves. Ordinarily it does not absorb enough radio waves to make trouble. But during solar flares — huge, flamelike eruptions of gas from the surface of the sun — the absorption of radio energy by the D layer is enormously increased and radio signals fade out. Solar flares may completely disrupt radio communications for days.

Ultrashort radio waves, such as those used in radar, television and frequency modulation broadcasting, are not bounced back by any of the ionized layers of the air, but pass right on through. It is for this reason that television and frequency modulation stations, unlike regular broadcast stations, reach only to the horizon.

A few years ago radio engineers discovered that even ultrashort waves occasionally went beyond the horizon, as though bounced off something up in the sky. The something proved to be turbulent masses of air. The discovery that turbulent air can bend radio waves back to the earth has led to an entirely new system of long-distance radio transmission called "radio scattering."

Radio scattering is not useful for home radio or television, as expensive equipment is required. But it promises to be of great value for long-distance communications, particularly in regions like the Arctic, where relay stations are difficult to construct and where magnetic disturbances make conventional radio unreliable. Since the air is always turbulent, scatter broadcasts promise to be extremely reliable.

If you were to step out into the ionosphere from some future space ship, the chances are you would feel nothing because of the thinness of the air. But the ionosphere is swept by winds and air currents that reach speeds of 300 miles an hour or more. They are caused by variations in temperature between day and night, and by the tidal pull of moon and sun on the air.

The great winds cause movement of the ions present in the ionosphere. The motion of the ions is responsible for the circulating electric current of the ionosphere, the so-called "dynamo current."

The latter has a marked effect on the earth's magnetic field and the behavior of magnetic compasses.

In turn, the earth's magnetic field helps shape the most spectacular of all ionosphere phenomena—the polar aurorae. The polar lights have intrigued men since there were men near enough the poles to see them. An explanation of the aurora was found a few years ago, mainly by Dr. A. B. Meinel and his associates at the University of Chicago's Yerkes Observatory.

The auroral lights are caused by hydrogen particles from the sun. Since these particles are electrically charged, the earth's magnetic field diverts them to the poles. There they strike nitrogen and oxygen atoms in the ionosphere, inducing them to glow and producing the auroral displays.

There is but one more feature of the ionosphere that need be mentioned. In the lower part of the stratosphere, the air is very cold. In the midsection it warms up to 32 degrees Fahrenheit, then the temperature drops again to 100 degrees below zero at the stratosphere-ionosphere boundary. Thereafter the temperature rises. No one knows yet why the temperature goes up and down that way.

It has been calculated that temperatures in the ionosphere may go as high as several thousand degrees. Upper-air visitors are nevertheless in no danger of burning up, provided they travel at a more modest speed than meteors. Solar radiation alone is not sufficient to make one feel hot; heat also must be transmitted by the surrounding air. Just as it is too thin to make one feel the ionospheric wind, the air in the ionosphere is too thin to make one feel the heat.

According to present plans, the artificial satellite is to be launched into an orbit 200 miles from the earth at its nearest point, and 1,400 miles at the farthest. Thus, the satellite is to journey in both the ionosphere and exosphere. In fact, the satellite will give man his first glimpse into the world beyond the ionosphere—the exosphere—and tell him just where it begins.

Upper-air physicists define the exosphere as that portion of the atmosphere where there is still air, but where the air is so thin and its molecules so far apart that the molecules can travel an indefinite distance without bumping into one another. They are then free, so to speak, to come and go as they please, save only for the influence of the earth's gravitational field.

Present estimates indicate that the atmosphere reaches this state of "freedom" about 400 miles up. Thereafter, it is supposed, the air becomes thinner and thinner until oxygen molecules, nitrogen molecules and atoms cease to exist, and, in fact, nothing exists but the occasional wandering dust particles and hydrogen atoms of interplanetary space. That point is believed to be reached 10,000 to 18,000 miles up.

Much of this is very nearly pure speculation, however. Nothing is really known of the exosphere or of the upper half of the ionosphere or of how they may influence events far below on the surface of the earth, such as radio broadcasting and the weather. Man will not know until he gets exploratory missiles and platforms up there — perhaps with man himself aboard one day — to find out.

The Growth of Moderation

SUMNER H. SLICHTER*

THE demand for moderation that all observers note as a growing characteristic of American politics is not merely attributable to current prosperity. Behind this demand are impressive changes in American economic and social conditions that have escaped general attention because they have been occurring so gradually. In the last forty or fifty years, however, these changes have produced a near revolution in the economic and social structure of the country.

Three principal long-run developments account for the slowly growing demand for moderate policies :

1. The traditional middle-class occupations have been growing faster than other kinds of jobs.
2. The composition of the middle class and the economic connections of its members have changed. As a result, the attitudes of members of the middle class toward economic issues have changed.
3. Great changes have occurred in the distribution of family incomes, enabling a considerable proportion of wage earners to adopt pretty much the same standard of consumption as professional and technical workers and as many administrators.

It is evident from these changes that the evolution of American society has followed a course very different from that frequently predicted a generation or so ago. At that time it was widely believed that technological change, the rise of big business, and the struggles between the classes would slowly wipe out the middle class. It was also widely predicted that, as the United States became older and more industrialized, class lines would sharpen and conflict between

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the classes would become more severe. But class lines have been becoming more and more blurred, and the demand for moderation in public policies appears to be coming from all groups in the community.

Let us see how the changes in economic and social conditions that have stimulated the demand for moderation have come about, and then let us consider briefly the broad implications of these changes — not only their effect upon politics but also their effect upon the economy and upon the culture of the country.

The traditional middle-class occupations are those of self-employed business owners (farmers, shop-keepers), professional and technical workers (some self-employed and others employees of business concerns and the government), salespeople, and clerical workers. In 1910 the workers in these occupations constituted 39.6 per cent of employed persons; in April, 1956, they formed 45.8 per cent — in spite of a big drop in the number of self-employed farmers from 17.3 per cent of employed persons in 1910 to 6.1 per cent in April, 1956. In the borderland between the traditional middle class and the laboring class are the skilled craftsmen. If these are counted in the middle class, the middle-class workers constituted 51.3 per cent of the labor force in 1910 and 59.1 per cent in April, 1956.

Behind the growth of middle-class employments lie changes in methods of business management, changes in technology, and changes in the kinds of goods and services demanded by consumers. About fifty years ago American business concerns began to discover the uses of staff executives. These are experts in various fields, such as engineering, accounting, marketing, personnel, industrial medicine, public relations, who advise the line or operating executives in making decisions and who, in some cases, help line executives carry out policies. There has been an enormous growth in these occupations and in the clerical workers to help the staff officers. For example, about the year 1900 business began to discover that record-keeping pays. At that time there was no cost accounting in

American industry — indeed, very little accounting of any kind. The entire country had only 250 C.P.A.'s ; today there are over 40,000. Other kinds of staff experts, such as time-study men, market analysts, personnel men, industrial physicians and nurses, who were virtually unknown fifty years ago, are today numbered by the thousands. Engineers, who were fairly well established in industry by 1900, have increased twenty times in the last half century — from 41,000 in 1900 to about 850,000 today. The latest development has been the addition of industrial research departments which employ over 200,000 research scientists and technologists and which industry is expanding just as rapidly as the colleges and universities can turn out trained men.

Technological change is another influence that has increased the relative importance of the middle class. Not only has it increased the demand for engineers, chemists, physicists, time-study men, and other technical and semi-technical workers, but cheap mobile power, made possible by the gas engine and the diesel, has drastically cut the demand for wielders of picks and shovels and for unskilled farm laborers. As a result, the number of common laborers has dropped from 8.9 million in 1910 to 5.9 million in April, 1956, and from one fourth of the employed persons to one eleventh.

Finally, rising family incomes have helped the middle class to grow because they have increased the number of families that can afford the services of professional workers — teachers of all kinds, doctors, dentists, writers, and entertainers.

During the last forty years the proportion of the middle class who are self-employed (farmers, business owners, independent professional workers) has dropped and the proportion who are employees has risen. Naturally employees, even well-paid employees, tend to see many matters from the point of view of the employee rather than from the viewpoint of the business owner or of top management. Thus far middle-class workers who are employees have shown only limited interest in unionism, but airplane pilots, actors, train dispatchers, and yardmasters are well organized, and

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there is some unionism among engineers doing routine work, and among teachers, draftsmen, journalists, salespeople, and office workers.

Part of the change in attitudes among middle-class workers comes from changes in their economic connections. The proportion of them who are employed by business is diminishing. Most teachers work for the government, and so do an increasing proportion of administrators, engineers, accountants, lawyers, and scientists. These employees are concerned with serving the public rather than with helping enterprises make money, and in some cases they are concerned with regulating private industry. Still others are trade-union officers or employees and represent the interests of wage earners in dealing with business. Since the middle class is increasingly composed of employees rather than of self-employed persons, and since a growing minority of the middle class do not work for business enterprises, it is not surprising that the interests of business owners carry less and less weight in the thinking of the middle class.

The narrowing of the differences in incomes during recent years has been almost sensational. Between 1935-36 and 1950 the average income among the one fifth of the families at the bottom of the income scale gained 78 per cent in purchasing power but the average income of the 5 per cent of the families at the top of the income scale gained only 17 per cent in purchasing power.

Two influences have been mainly responsible for cutting the differences in family incomes. One has been the strong ambition of people to improve their lot. This ambition, together with the availability of free or almost-free public education, has greatly increased the reluctance of many persons to accept unskilled jobs and has increased the number of persons qualified for skilled or technical jobs. As a result, the wages of unskilled workers have risen faster than the wages of skilled and professional employees — in spite of the fact that industry has less and less need for common labor and more and more need for skilled and technical workers.

The second influence narrowing the differences in family incomes has been the entrance of women (particularly wives) into

industry. In 1940, one out of eight married women worked in industry ; at present the ratio is about one out of four or less. Married women are most likely to work when the income of the husband is low. Among non-farm families in which the husband earned \$3000 a year or less, the proportion of wives in the labor force was about twice as large as among the families in which the husband earned \$5000 a year or more. Most of the family incomes of \$6000 to \$10,000 are made possible because the wife works — for in two out of three such families the wife is a wage earner.

Because the gap between the wages of the unskilled and those of skilled and technical workers is narrower than formerly, and since one out of four wives is a wage earner, the nature of the husband's occupation no longer determines family income. For example, one out of five families of skilled craftsmen has an income of more than \$7000 a year. But among professional and technical workers the proportion is one out of six, and among sales and clerical workers, only one out of seven. About 72 per cent of the families of managers and non-farm business proprietors have incomes of less than \$7000. Hence one out of five skilled craftsmen and their families are able to live better than more than seven out of ten managers and business owners. In such a society class lines naturally become quite blurred. Many a wage earner has just as much cause to worry about how government spending affects his income tax as does the typical manager, doctor, or lawyer.

It is not surprising that skilled or semi-skilled workers, whose children go to high school or college, who own homes, drive cars, have television sets, and who in general live as well as a large proportion of lawyers, doctors, salesmen, foremen, and teachers, do not think of themselves as belonging to a class apart. They feel very much members of the community and are inclined to adopt pretty much the same variety of viewpoints on most public issues (money for schools, higher taxes on gasoline, stricter zoning laws, foreign aid, publicly-owned water power, defense spending, general tax cuts, help for agriculture) as other members of the community.

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It is becoming clearer every day that these economic and social changes are strengthening the demand for middle-of-the-road policies, and the most astute present and recent leaders of both parties — President Eisenhower, Adlai Stevenson, Lyndon Johnson, Thomas Dewey — have been quick to note it. The movement toward moderation during recent years has come from both the right and the left. Much of the middle class has moved from a position of great conservatism to a middle-of-the-road position. Since many middle-class workers are employees and are also identified with management, their views of issues reflect a mixture of the employee viewpoint and the management viewpoint. Wage earners, too, have been moving toward a middle-of-the-road position — the result of their increasing ability to live in the same way as other parts of the community.

The shift toward the middle of the road is reflected, on the one hand, in the success of the Republicans in increasing their share of the labor vote as the party has become more liberal and, on the other hand, in the success of the Democrats in holding a good part of the managerial and professional vote acquired during the depression of the thirties, as these groups have gradually become less business-minded. In 1952 the Republican and Democratic parties each had a large part of the vote of the skilled and semi-skilled workers — 45 per cent for Eisenhower, 52 per cent for Stevenson, and 3 per cent for other candidates. The proportion of trade unionists preferring Republican presidential candidates increased from 20 per cent in 1936 to 39 per cent in 1952 and to 56 per cent in May, 1956. On the other hand, in 1952, 32 per cent of the professional and managerial workers, traditionally a conservative group, preferred Stevenson and 2 per cent preferred minor candidates.

The result of these two movements from the right and the left toward the center has been a demand for the welfare state, but for a rather mild form of welfare state. Most people wish the government to give help to various groups in the country — considerable protection to employees and to farmers against economic hazards, considerable help to small business, retired persons, disabled workers,

and fatherless children. But there is no strong demand for drastic changes in economic institutions or policies — for radical changes in the control of industry or in the relations between government and industry. If either party were to offer an extreme program, it would quickly find itself with only a handful of supporters. There is nothing for the two parties to do except to compete for the votes of the moderates.

The economic and social changes of the last generation have had profound effects, not only upon politics but also upon the economy of the country, and they raise important questions for the future of American culture. The principal effect upon the economy has been to make consumers play a more active role in determining the demand for goods, and thus to make the economy more dynamic. Competition in consumption has always been keen in the United States, but it has been made keener in recent years by the rise of low incomes relative to large incomes and by the consequent weakening of class lines. The growing competitiveness of consumption is clearly shown by the rapid growth of consumer credit. One of the great uses of consumer credit is to enable families to buy things that their neighbors do not yet possess. Another use is to enable families to keep up with their neighbors by buying without further delay things that their neighbors already have.

Keen competition in consumption helps the economy grow since it causes demand to expand ahead of personal incomes. Obviously such an economy grows more readily than one in which the volume of consumption is almost completely determined by the size of personal incomes. Many economists have seriously underestimated the capacity of the American economy to grow because they have believed that consumers play only a passive role in determining the demand for goods — merely spending their incomes rather than initiating increases in demand more or less independently of changes in their incomes.

The recent economic and social changes in the United States also raise very fundamental questions about the future of our civilization. Many people of high ideals are concerned lest a philosophy of

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moderation interfere with the ability of a country to improve the condition of its people. Is a country that loves moderation, that wishes to enjoy its prosperity, that strives for peace of mind, capable of having the aspirations and the ambitions and the determination that great advances in civilization require? These advances demand strong dissatisfaction with some aspects of things as they are and strong resolution to change those conditions. Will the habit of being moderate prevent the people from adopting high ambitions and developing a stubborn determination to achieve them?

I suspect that a spirit of moderation is usually favorable to progress. So far, the greatest obstacle to progress has not been disagreement about objectives or ideals, but division among the supporters of widely accepted ideals as to how best to achieve them. Time and again noble causes have been discredited because their supporters have insisted on moving ahead rapidly with untried methods. Willingness to proceed slowly step by step and to experiment on a small scale with ways and means (a spirit of moderation) would have produced more progress.

As for the danger that a spirit of moderation will weaken our ambitions and aspirations, protection will come from the growing influence of science upon men's thinking. Science is a spur to progress because it forces new responsibilities upon us. It does this because it gives us far more control over our environment than any previous age has possessed. Incomplete as our control still is, it is sufficient to rob us of the comfortable excuse that we might as well ignore a condition or a problem because, as men used to think, not much can be done about it anyway. Today, for the first time in history, men must face the fact that they have the capacity, if they have the will, to do something about most problems that confront them. With science forcing new problems on our attention and showing us that we can probably do something about them, we are well protected from the danger that a spirit of moderation will prevent the community from seeing the faults in existing institutions and from entertaining strong ambitions to make the world a better place.

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MR. FRANKLIN: A SELECTION FROM HIS PERSONAL LETTERS, edited by Leonard W. Labaree and Whitfield J. Bell, Jr. Yale University Press.

Reviewed by EDITH WARREN

The pleasure of reading other people's mail is proved anew by this attractive little book. A 250th birthday tribute, it serves equally as a herald of the formidable work of Franklin scholarship being prepared by these same editors in "The Papers of Benjamin Franklin." Indeed, the only criticism that might be made is that the book is too short; this fault will be remedied in full by its successors.

Mr. Labaree and Mr. Bell have gracefully abstained from "the scholarly apparatus of annotation, collation, and bibliography", in the interests of presenting "Franklin, the man, to his fellow citizens" of today. Although the historian will, of course, find it delightful, this is a selection for the general reader; the approach is informal, and unobtrusive help is extended to those not acquainted with the period (as when it is explained that "philosophy" was then the term for what we now call "science"). Simplicity, brevity and humor characterize the editing throughout.

The volume is a handsome piece of book production: type, paper, and fine color illustrations do justice to the subject, and the cover design has Franklin associations—a pleasing touch.

Here, then, is the familiar figure of America's Mr. Franklin, playful, sensible, humane, buoyant and curious, expressing himself on a considerable range of topics, growing "warm" over British injustice, prosy over immortality, wry over love. He is humanly imperfect—sensitive to criticism (despite

protestations of indifference), subject to some prejudices of time and place, sometimes exasperating in his rather priggish prudence. But how funny he is on "how to recommend a stranger." How delicately and gravely he compliments General Washington. How lucidly he describes his observations of a whirlwind or a balloon ascension. He flirts, as we hoped he would, with a Frenchwoman. He chats solemnly with a child, plies sister, wife and daughter with loving advice, writes an affecting farewell to an old friend.

He wished he might be "recalled to life" to visit a future America; future America might well wish the same.

QUEST FOR A CONTINENT, by Walter Sullivan. McGraw-Hill Book Company.

Reviewed by TREVOR LLOYD

A few weeks ago the mail brought a letter, otherwise undistinguished but for the post-mark which read SOUTH POLE STATION—Jan. 1, 1957. It came from a young geographer who commands the naval unit that will for the next eighteen months share with a small group of scientists the honor and responsibility of standing watch at what may prove to be the coldest, and is certainly the most desolate place on earth.

Almost two centuries of adventure, failure, tragedy and courage lie behind that post-mark. Men of many nations—Capt. James Cook of England, Admiral von Bellingshausen of Russia, a long line of Yankee sealers, the redoubtable Lieut. Charles Wilkes and others from the United States, Japanese, Norwegians, Australians, Germans, Swedes, Belgians and French—have slowly pieced together the

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map of the five million square mile plateau of snow and ice in the midst of which a conscientious postmaster now plies his trade.

How was it all done? "Quest for a Continent" tells us in quite the best general account of the Antarctic that has so far appeared. Walter Sullivan, the author, is a veteran Antarctic correspondent for The New York Times, and is at the moment in the very deep south aboard the U. S. S. Glacier, an ice-breaker more powerful than any of her predecessors. But he is clearly more than a simple observer of the efforts of others. He has shared with the explorers the hazards and discomforts of life among the ice floes and on the blizzard-swept trail. This personal experience enriches his excellent book, which reveals him as a veritable store-house of Antarctic know-how.

"The exploration of the Antarctic regions is the greatest piece of geographical exploration still to be undertaken." With these words the Sixth International Geographical Congress held in London in 1895 launched the modern attack on the scientific secrets of the southern continent. Within two decades what Mr. Sullivan terms "the heroic era" of exploration was well under way. Two expeditions had sledged to the South Pole, one had attempted to cross the whole continent, and a considerable store of scientific knowledge of the land-mass, the ice-filled seas, the weather and the wild life had been assembled. Yet the exploration was a painfully slow, seemingly endless and all too often disastrous business, and a better way had sooner or later to be found.

The outstanding contribution of Admiral Richard E. Byrd to polar exploration was his use of the technique of mass assault, employing many ships, aircraft, radio, tractors and large semi-permanent base camps all necessarily costing a great deal of money. This new tempo has characterized American polar exploration down to the present. Only by such elaborate means can the last continent be mapped and the surrounding seas charted. Yet the author of "Quest for a Continent" sees clearly the limitations of such "wholesale"

operations. He cites the advantages of the far smaller expedition led by Comdr. Finn Ronne in 1947 which "was able to return with a harvest of scientific findings that would be a credit to a far more costly expedition." He sees real merit in the work of small scientifically minded parties that go south "without seeking to perform any feats that would bring fame or glory."

At present there are about thirty more or less permanent scientific stations on the Antarctic continent. Most of them form part of the program of the International Geophysical Year (better known as I. G. Y.) which aims to secure simultaneous observations of basic physical data from all parts of the world during 1957-58. Among the most active collaborators is Russia, which has signaled its return to the Antarctic after almost 150 years by building two large, well-equipped stations manned by veterans of the Soviet north. When the I. G. Y. projects are completed in 1958 it is generally believed that "the last great *terra incognita* will have been wiped from the globe." Yet when the final glacier has been found and the ultimate peak has been charted, much will still remain to be done "in the sober pursuit of truth."

Some of the best writing in the book is in the author's descriptions of the fundamental scientific research that has been central to all recent expeditions. The recording of neutrons and mesons near the geomagnetic pole, the past changes in climate and the impact of the atomic age on Antarctica are told of in a way that fascinates even the least scientifically minded of us. Yet here is no textbook on abstruse Antarctic geophysics, as is shown by the following excerpt from his account of a visit to an earlier "Little America" now deeply buried in the Ross Ice Shelf.

"The scene *** was breath-taking. Never had a Quonset hut *** been decked out in such glory. In the lantern lights its walls sparkled as though solidly encrusted with diamonds. The tunnel *** was a miniature crystal palace completely covered with ice-crystals. Some were as large as the palm of a

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man's hand. Most were so delicate that they shattered with a puff of breath. Perhaps nowhere in the world could there be found so fragile a sound as the tinkling of these crystals when a man brushed past."

Antarctica is the home of the blizzard, an austere and unfriendly continent whose step-by-step discovery has been marked by tragedy. Yet, to Mr. Sullivan it is also an entrancingly beautiful real of glistening icebergs, steaming volcanos and endless plains of gleaming snow, all populated by delightful Adelie penguins, Weddell seals and snow petrels under the glowing flames of the aurora. This book will, I believe, prove to be a landmark in polar literature and a sure guide to the next generations of scientists and explorers who set out on the continuing quest for the southland.

WILSON: THE NEW FREEDOM, by
Arthur S. Link. Princeton University Press.

A CROSSROADS OF FREEDOM, edited by
John Wells Davidson. Yale University Press.

Reviewed by JAMES MACGREGOR BURNS

When it comes to great American Presidents, I must confess that I am a devotee of the multi-volume biography. How else can we get the enormous detail involved in every Presidential action of major consequence? Even the less important of such actions involve hundreds of strands of thought and action — involve public opinion in all its many dimensions, scores of Congressmen, Presidential aides, bureaucrats, interested bystanders, and the assumptions, false starts, queries, indecision, afterthoughts, changed tactics of the President himself.

The complex events of Wilson's first two years in the White House are the subject of the second volume of Professor Link's biographical series. In his practiced and surefooted way, the author takes us through the struggles over key domestic and foreign policies of those years — tariff reform, the Federal Reserve Act,

antitrust legislation, the first stages of Wilson's Latin American and Mexican policies. The way is sometimes circuitous, as fascinating aspects of the story are developed in footnotes, but the reader feels that he has seen the intriguing by-ways of the political process as well as the main highway of action.

The author is mainly concerned with Wilson's personal and political growth during the period, and keeps returning to his subject in the interstices of his panorama of policy and politics. He shows Wilson as an unpredictable combination of tenacity and compromise. Sometimes the President gave in to pressure, more often he took a stand and held it — and the remarkable thing is how often his judgment proved right. Partly by force of personality, partly by full use of Presidential power and position, Wilson put through a New Freedom program that was imperiled more often and from more directions than is commonly recognized. Wilson also reveals himself through his letters — far more so, for example, than did Franklin Roosevelt — and Professor Link is able to quote copiously from them. Thus Wilson wrote in June 1913:

"You see, it's this way: We live distracting days. . . . We are at the beck and call of others (how many, many others!) and almost never have a chance to order our days as we wish to order them, or to follow our own thoughts and devices. The life we lead is one of infinite distraction, confusion, — fragmentary, broken in upon and athwart in every conceivable way; and I, for one, need fixed points upon which to base my . . . actions from hour to hour. My friends are those fixed points. My intercourse with them helps me restore my identity from time to time, to get the confusion out of my nervous system and feel like the real Woodrow Wilson, a fellow of fixed connections, loyal to long established, deep-rooted friendships and associations, living through his heart and his affections, his tastes and all that runs in him independent of circumstances and occupation and momentary tasks."

This volume is a rich field for the student of American politics, and may cause some

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re-thinking. For example, even before he was inaugurated Wilson had to choose between leadership of a Democratic-insurgent Republican coalition of progressives, and party leadership acting through the Democratic Congressional membership and machinery. He chose the latter, and this choice played its part in making the New Freedom a fairly faithful materialization of the Democratic party platform of 1912, with all its promise and limitation. The modern Roosevelt-Truman-Stevenson party dates from 1916 rather than 1912, and one looks forward to Professor Link's treatment of Wilson's shift to a more modern brand of progressivism.

But if during his first two years Wilson was content to play the party game, he played it very well. Under his leadership, the Congressional caucus was a vital means of establishing and enacting party policy. (Why has this venerable mechanism been allowed to deteriorate in recent decades?) He used traditional methods of Presidential influence — patronage, understandings with state and local bosses, face-to-face persuasion — and he used the threat to "take issues to the country." Informing all Wilson's actions was the conviction that Presidents must lead, must "incarnate the consciences of the men whom they rule," even though such leadership often involves compromises as well as boldness.

Professor Link's second volume goes far to realize the early promise of a great and indispensable biography. He and his readers can look forward to his next volumes with keen anticipation and confidence. Another advantage of the multi-volume biography is that the spectator can exhort as well as encourage. One hopes that somewhere the author can pause to offer an extended analysis of the interplay of Wilson's personal development and the political context in which he operated. This is usually the main burden of the single-volume biography, but with the bigger effort author and reader can have their cake and eat it, too.

A Crossroads of Freedom is a compilation of Wilson's campaign speeches of 1912, published

under the sponsorship of the Woodrow Wilson Foundation. Edited with lavish care and remarkable fidelity, the volume gives us for the first time the full texts of most of the major campaign speeches and parts of many minor ones. Professor Davidson, of the history department of the University of Maryland, provides vivid background sketches, textual explanation, and documentation. The volume is exemplary of its kind. May we hope for another for the 1916 campaign?

HISTORY IN A CHANGING WORLD,
by Geoffrey Barraclough. University of
Oklahoma Press.

Reviewed by HARRY ELMER BARNES

In the opinion of the reviewer, Professor Barraclough's volume is the most stimulating collection of historical essays to be published in the United States since the appearance of James Harvey Robinson's *The New History* in 1911. Like the brilliant Robinson book, it is mainly a collection of essays, lectures, and articles but has a unifying orientation and frame of reference.

The book, as a whole, is devoted mainly to three chief themes: the nature and purposes of history, an illuminating interpretation of the more critical periods in the historic past, and the nature and significance of the unique problems and perspectives created by the events of the last forty years.

The author believes that we are now in a great critical era or "climacteric," roughly comparable to the downfall of classical civilization, the trends in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Reformation, and the French Revolution. Specifically, our age most closely resembles the end of the Roman Republic and the trend toward Empire. But the extent of the disintegration, readjustments, and possible hope for the future in our era is unique and defies close comparison with any earlier crisis in human experience.

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A notable phase of the current situation is that our era marks "the end of European history," in the sense of regarding the European continent as the center of institutional development and political power. This has now passed to the United States and Soviet Russia. The influence of Europe in the future will rest on tradition and culture, if anything. Ultimately, the main concatenation of power and control may pass to Asia and Africa.

Professor Barraclough gives much attention to the theory of progress. He contends that, for mankind as a whole, there is no doubt of the reality of progress, but the dogma does not hold for specific civilizations. For the most part, they have risen, prospered, and fallen apart. Much of the pessimism of writers, including historians, today is due to myopia and provincialism — the assumption that because the older European civilization is now disintegrating as the main custodian of political and military power, human civilization as a whole is in jeopardy or doomed. Every civilization in the past has had a similarly grim view in its declining epoch, but mankind has gone ahead, nonetheless. If we can control and inhibit the new technological implements of mass-murder in warfare, there is every reason to believe that better periods than the past has ever known may lie ahead.

In the reviewer's opinion, the only possible serious flaw in Professor Barraclough's argument lies in his failure to reckon with the Orwellian trends in our day, which can mean that the formula of cold and phony war — "perpetual war for perpetual peace" — may freeze our culture in a sterile pattern for an indefinite period.

In his selection of the critical and influential periods in the experience of Western society since Rome, most alert historians would criticize his rather old-fashioned emphasis on political and religious history; for example, placing the Investiture struggle, the Reformation, and the French Revolution ahead of the scientific and technological advances in the Middle Ages, the expansion of Europe after 1500, and the Industrial Revolution as dynamic impulses to a new era.

THESE THOUSAND HILLS, by A. B. Guthrie, Jr., Houghton Mifflin Company.

Reviewed by WALTER VAN TILBURG CLARK

In "These Thousand Hills," his third novel, Pulitzer Prize winner A. B. Guthrie Jr. tells the story of the backwash from the finished westering — a flood that reversed its course to fill the inland empire already traversed by the pioneers. The story is told by way of Lat Evans, Montana rancher; its end-product is the slow, contentious thickening toward civilization in that territory that put an end to the predatory interlude of buffalo skinners, Indian fighters and open-range cattlemen. Like Mr. Guthrie's two previous volumes, "The Big Sky," a magnificently pictorial account of the mountain-man era, and the steadily moving "The Way West," which told of the Oregon Trail, "These Thousand Hills" is spaciouly conceived and closely thought out. With it, Mr. Guthrie puts beyond question what many of his readers had already guessed, that he is working deliberately and with foresight within the larger intention of depicting the opening and development of the American Northwest.

If this were the only certainty concerning Mr. Guthrie's work as a whole to emerge from "These Thousand Hills," it might give rise to as much uneasiness as hope about what is yet to come in the chronicle. There are ways in which this work is not so strong a book as either of its predecessors, and only too often the task of sustaining a long, planned series, especially within the arbitrary frames of history, can weary an author into dead writing and formula plotting. But, if there are signs of less successful work in "These Thousand Hills," it is also, in itself and in what it makes clearer about "The Big Sky" and "The Way West," the sufficient proof that they have not resulted from any cheapening of intention or weakening of will.

On the contrary, as a longer glance back now shows us, Mr. Guthrie has worked out

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a method admirably suited to keeping each book complete and alive in itself, and making it serve its purpose in the whole at the same time. And this method, once seen, provides us with the much more important certainty that the author is sustained not only by a historical concern which well might wane but also by a fictional aim of a higher and more durable sort. And that both the method and the intention are still at work in "These Thousand Hills."

"The Big Sky" tells the story of the mountain men. True, but more to the point, it does so by means of a profound re-creation of the life, internal and external, from its rebellious beginnings to its shadowy passing, of one highly credible, complete mountain man, Boone Caudill. And this concern for the individual, even though he may be at the same time a representative of his kind, creates a strong, unbroken narrative movement, though it presents an aimless, wandering, almost unconscious life, for which the simple fact of being is almost enough. And, of equal importance, presents it as dominated by that splendid, vast and impersonal wilderness which creates it and which makes simple being enough.

"The Way West" tells the story of the Oregon Trail, that almost compulsive migration of farmers which led to the first consequential settlement of the Northwest. This was a collective movement. No one man, until he emerged from it in trial, could embody it. But Mr. Guthrie gave it the fictional power of the particular by telling it in terms of the journey of one wagon train, and then, increasingly, by way of the life of one family within that train, the Evans family, from which, finally, the proven figure emerges. And here the same wilderness that was splendid panorama in "The Big Sky" becomes mostly a narrow, fearful vision to the right and the left, and a series of heartbreaking obstacles ahead. The same world is not the same world to a solitary, free-moving hunter and to a family-burdened farmer.

Moreover, the two novels are linked (though with a wise looseness) by the presence in both of one character, Dick Summers, that incomplete, part-farmer mountain man who was Boone Caudill's mentor. In "The Way West" he becomes the remote and faintly contemptuous guide of the wagon-train, and the equally useful guide to the reader, inducing the retrospective glance, and mediating in the comparison of mountain man and emigrant.

Now, in "These Thousand Hills" Lat Evans, conceived and born out of wedlock in that wagon-train, and divided between the frustrated westering impulse of his grandfather and the stern, guilty, God-fearing fixity of his father, turns with the backwash into Montana and performs, fictionally, both a bridging service comparable to Summers' and the major duty of embodying his time. For the time, also divided, is the time of a similar conflict between the dying old West and the growing new West of towns, fenced ranches, businesses, railroads, banks, churches and schools. So Lat moves, an inturned man in a back-turning world, slowly and in torment through the end of one age: a long trail drive, a season of last-gasp buffalo skinning, imprisonment by uneasy Indians off the reservation, a horse race with betting with other Indians, and a love affair, of the border kind, with Callie, a prostitute in Miss Fran's parlor "house."

Next come the beginnings of another age: a bank loan to start Lat's ranching, his marriage to a religious-minded school teacher, Joyce Sheridan, his survival (because he had cut and stacked hay) in the terrible winter of 1886-87 when the last open-range-minded men were finished, a reluctant part in a vigilante action against horse thieves. There was trouble with Callie, and trouble with Joyce because of Callie (one has to choose between two rights, he said, and that was a word for his life), and trouble with Tom Ping, the incurably open-range Texan who had been his partner on the trail and in the buffalo camp but became his enemy when the sides were chosen. None of this is easy for Lat. In finally turning away from Tom Ping, refusing his challenge to a

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gun fight, and in returning, half devoted, to a Joyce who cannot understand, he makes not his peace but his compromise with the new age.

It would appear, then, that Mr. Guthrie has sought to embody the spirit of each era of his series in the kind of man created by that era and most important to it. It would also appear that he has sought to give the very form of each book a reinforcing likeness to that spirit — for "The Big Sky," a world vast, loose and scenic; for "The Way West," a world narrow and moving, and for "These Thousand Hills" a world tight, various, uncertain and contentious. And if "These Thousand Hills" does not move with quite the certainty and power of its predecessors, it seems likely that the difference results, not from any faltering on Mr. Guthrie's part, but from the nature of his materials. It may be that it is not possible to

render the complexities of an era of increasing density, involvement and moral debate with the same unity or within the same scope that will serve the wanderings of a lone or the progress of a single, obsessive passion, and that Mr. Guthrie will be forced, as his chronicle continues, to move a little more slowly, to deal, book by book, with phases, not epochs, with men representative of phases not of an age entire.

It is to be hoped that the chronicle will continue. What emerges above all from a consideration of "These Thousand Hills," and a glance back at "The Big Sky" and "The Way West," is the fact that Mr. Guthrie is moved by a fictional purpose as high and valid as his historical purpose is big, and that the two are soundly related, that he is writing, out of the real events of a real world, something like a spiritual epic of the Northwest.

